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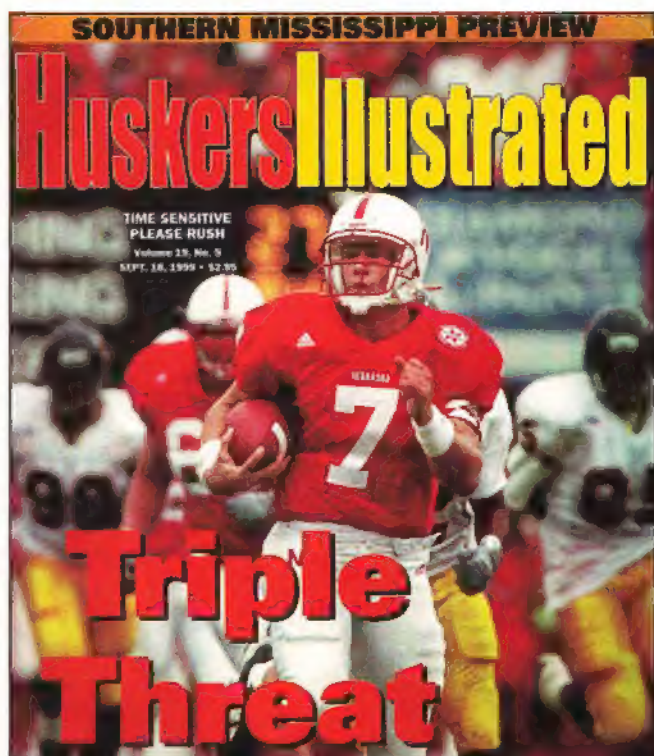
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Editorial: (402) 474-4355/Hleditor@aol.com

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20 Speed Key for Defense

Nebraska's defense is definitely fast, and not just in the secondary. *By Mike Babcock*

ON THE COVER

Quarterback Eric Crouch is chased by Texas' Anthony Hicks. *Photo by David Deardorff*

Huskers Almost Overcome Mistakes

*Do the Longhorns
have Nebraska's number?*



**Brian
HILL**

SATURDAY was a good indication of the fine line between winning and losing, not just games but potential national championships.

All three of the "Big Three" — Florida State, Penn State and Nebraska — were on the ropes. No. 1 Florida State needed a late field goal to hold off 3-4 Clemson 17-14. No. 2 Penn State had all it could handle before holding off 5-3 Purdue 31-25.

And then there was that other game, the one that didn't turn out the way it was supposed to.

Did the idle week slow Nebraska's momentum? Does Texas just have Nebraska's number, as Oklahoma did for so many years?

No and no.

From here, it looked like the Huskers could have and probably should have won the game. Nebraska had a big edge in most statistical categories, including total yards — 429-275 — and time of possession — 34:13-25:47.

The momentum changed and the outcome hinged on turnovers. Texas, which had six turnovers just two weeks earlier against Kansas State, did not turn the ball over. Nebraska fumbled five times and lost three, including one at the UT 10 and one at the 2.

"The turnovers were dramatic," Nebraska Coach Frank Solich said. "Very, very costly."

Dan Alexander, who led the Huskers with 136 yards on 21 carries, agreed.

"You can say we're jinxed, have bad luck, but we just have to eliminate mistakes," he said.

Those mistakes came in many areas, starting with the coin toss. Nebraska won the toss and deferred to the sec-

ond half. But through a mixup, Texas got the football and the wind to start the game.

The Huskers also had penalties in crucial situations, failed to convert on two key fourth-down plays and left themselves with no timeouts late in the game.

The defense, which had been so steady during the 6-0 start, was not immune and had its share of blown coverages and missed tackles, especially in the second half.

"We didn't hold our end of the deal up," said Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride.

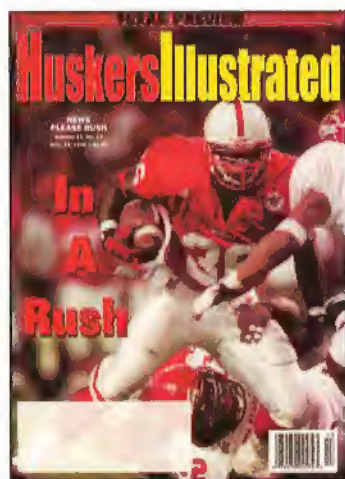
Although McBride chose to take the blame, the defense actually played pretty well, limiting the Longhorns to 44 yards rushing in the first three quarters and a total of 97. Texas, which had been averaging more than 300 yards per game through the air, passed for 213.

Contributing editor Mike Babcock takes a look at the Husker defense, which ranked third nationally entering the game, in this issue.

We also give you a preview of the Kansas Jayhawks, coming off an emotional victory in the 108th edition of their border war with Missouri. KU officials will even have to find new goal posts, as students took them down after the 21-0 victory.

Despite the Huskers' disappointing loss to Texas, there is still a lot of football left this season, and the Big 12 championship is still within reach.

How about a rematch in San Antonio? ■



Got Something To Say?

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**EDITOR,
GENERAL MANAGER**
Brian Hill

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Mike Babcock

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
James Hale, Todd Hennrichs, Curt
McKeever, Bob Schaller, Steve
Sipple, Nebraska Sports
Information Office

**CONTRIBUTING
PHOTOGRAPHERS**
Scott Bruhn, David Deardorff,
Nebraska Sports Information
Office

**SPORTS MARKETING
& ADVERTISING DIRECTOR**
Jeff Tudor

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR
G Associates Inc.

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E-Mail Addresses

Editor: Hleditor@aol.com
Advertising/marketing: jtuder@nauvut.net

New Players Fit In

Center Ffriend shows athleticism during preseason physical testing

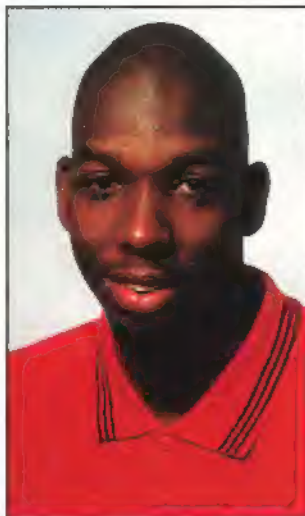
It was a first for Danny Nee. On a Friday night not long before the start of preseason basketball practice, Kimani Ffriend and Danny Walker showed up with their girlfriends at his house.

They stayed until the early-morning hours, talking and playing pool. Finally, Nee told them they could continue playing pool or video games, but he was going to bed.

"I said, 'I'm too old for this,'" he said. "That has never happened to me. I've never had one of my players seek me out on a Friday night, come out and shoot pool with me until 1:30 (a.m.). So my relationship with Kimani and the new players is not good; it's absolutely excellent."

Ffriend, one of five Cornhusker newcomers, is a 6-foot-11, 220-pound center and the heir apparent to 1999 Big 12 Player of the Year Venson Hamilton at center.

Despite his size, he's extremely athletic, as his marks in preseason physical testing indicate. He ran the 40-yard dash in 4.79 sec-



Transfer Kimani Ffriend is the heir apparent to Big 12 Player of the Year Venson Hamilton at center.

onds and the 10-yard dash in 1.67 seconds, second-best on the team behind guard Cookie Belcher's 1.52 seconds. And his vertical jump was 30 inches.

Ffriend, who's from Kingston, Jamaica, and didn't play basketball in high school, played two seasons at two different junior colleges. Last season, he averaged 18.2 points, 9.5 rebounds and 5.4 blocked shots in 24 games at Gulf Coast (Fla.) Community College.

"He has a passion for the game that I've never seen before, a passion. The guy wants to play," said Nee. "He has an appetite

and a desire to be successful. And he's very unique in that he's not contaminated. He has not played high school basketball. He's played a little bit of junior college basketball.

"So we can mold him any way we want because he has a work ethic that's outstanding."

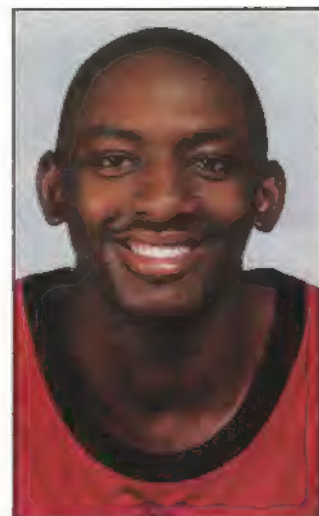
Ffriend also brings some uncertainty with him. He transferred to Gulf Coast Community College after one season at Dekalb (Ga.) Junior College and he didn't finish last season because of a personality conflict with his coach. "The only word I can use is, he's high-maintenance," Nee said.

"But I'd rather have a high-maintenance great player than a high-maintenance player that stinks. I've had both. So I'll take the talent. If he's going to be a pain . . . I hope he's a good player."

"I can take players who are a pain. I'll work with them."

"Now, will we have problems? I expect problems. I think he's one of the most coachable players I've ever had, but he's very emotional, very strong in what he says."

Steffon Bradford, another



Guard Rodney Fields, a transfer from Tyler (Texas) Junior College, missed last season following surgery.

er junior college transfer who is expected to step in at power forward, "is the same way," said Nee. So is Walker, yet another transfer and the new point guard.

All three also are "very focused," Nee said. "They're here to play basketball and go to school."

HEARTBREAK KID

Rodney Fields is the forgotten man among the Cornhusker newcomers. That's because the off-guard from Tampa, Fla., isn't really a newcomer even though he has yet to play.

1999-2000 Nebraska Men's Roster

No. Name	Pos	Cl.	Ht.	Hometown (HS/JC)
30 Cookie Belcher***	G	Sr.	6-4	Mexico, Mo.
21 Kenny Booker	F	Fr.	6-8	Clarksdale, Miss. (Mt. Zion Academy)
15 Steffon Bradford	F	Jr.	6-6	Clewiston, Fla. (Compton CC)
23 Ross Buckendahl*	F	Jr.	6-5	Battle Creek, Neb. (Northeast CC)
41 Ben Chesnut	F	Fr.	6-6	Crestwood, Ky. (South Oldham)
3 Cary Cochran*	G	So.	6-1	Minden, Iowa (Neola-Tri Center)
20 Brian Conklin	F/C	Fr.	6-11	Hubbard, Ohio
31 Kimani Ffriend	C	Jr.	6-11	Kingston, Jamaica (Gulf Coast CC)
11 Rodney Fields	G	Jr.	6-2	Tampa, Fla. (Tyler, Texas JC)
5 Larry Florence***	F	Sr.	6-5	Phenix City, Ala. (Central)
51 Louis Truscott*	F	So.	6-7	Houston, Texas (Milby)
0 Danny Walker	G	Jr.	6-1	Los Angeles, Calif. (Compton CC)
34 Craig Wortman*	G	Jr.	6-4	Hartington, Neb. (Northeast CC)

*-letters earned

1999-2000 Nebraska Women's Roster

No. Name	Pos	Cl.	Ht.	Hometown (HS/JC)
41 Candace Blackbird*	G/F	So	6-0	South Sioux City, Neb.
11 Amanda Buchholz	G	Fr.	5-7	Ogallala, Neb.
12 Amanda Cleveland	F/C	So.	6-2	Lancaster, Texas
34 Cisco Gilmore***	F/C	Sr.	6-0	Tulsa, Okla. (Will Rogers)
5 Jennifer Jaracz*	F	So.	6-0	Crestwood, Ky. (South Oldham)
25 Stephanie Jones	F	Fr.	6-2	Omaha, Neb. (Benson)
32 Nicole Kubik***	G	Jr.	5-10	Cambridge, Neb.
11 I'sha Kelley	G	Fr.	5-9	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
54 Casey Leonhardt	C	Jr.	6-5	Downers Grove, Ill. (North/Ilinois)
14 Karsen Muller*	G	So.	5-6	Littleton, Colo. (Arapahoe)
4 Melody Peterson	G	Jr.	5-9	Pasadena, Calif. (Mater Dei/Stanford)
22 Margaret Richards	G	Fr.	5-9	Louisville, Ky. (Central)
24 Shahidrah Roberts	F	Fr.	5-9	Overland Park, Kan. (Blue Valley North)
33 Charlie Rogers***	C	Sr.	6-2	South Sioux City, Neb.
21 Brooke Schwartz***	G	Jr.	5-9	Gering, Neb.
30 Paige Sutton	F/C	Fr.	6-2	San Diego, Calif. (Bishop Gorman, Nev.)
20 Amanda Went**	G	Jr.	5-9	Columbus, Neb.
44 Monique Whitfield*	F	Sr.	6-1	L. Beach, Calif. (Lakewood/Cent. Ariz. CC)

He was forced to sit out a medical redshirt last season, after transferring from Tyler (Texas) Junior College.

"I think Rodney Fields is just the heartbreak kid," said Nee.

Fields signed a letter of intent with Nebraska after graduating from Tampa Bay Tech, but "because of an administrative miscue in the counting of credits, he didn't make it," Nee said.

"It was an administrative error in his school that cost him his eligibility."

Fields enrolled at Tyler Junior College, averaging 15 points, six rebounds and three assists per game as a sophomore.

Then, even though "he could have gone to any school he wanted in the United States, he chose to come back and honor what he had out of high school," said Nee.

He couldn't play immediately, however, because of a shin-splint problem that required surgery in September of 1998. A steel rod was inserted in his lower right leg.

Now, it appears Fields' tribulations are over. And Nee is pleased.

"He's a bright, articulate guy. He's a man who's totally committed to team. He's totally committed to Nebraska. And he's a very good basketball player.

"You're going to like him at both ends of the floor."

At 6-foot-2 and 210 pounds, Fields will provide a physical presence in the backcourt.

"He's good. He's strong. He's tough. And he's a team guy," said Nee. "He brings all the attributes to the table that I think of a winner. He has no ego, keeps his mouth shut and plays hard.

"I think he'd make a great defensive back. You should see him jump."

Fields' vertical jump in preseason testing was 33 1/2 inches, showing he is apparently 100 percent. ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

NEWCOMBE STILL TAKING SNAPS AT QUARTERBACK

Junior Bobby Newcombe, who has settled in at wingback, continues to take snaps at quarterback during practice, just in case. Coach Frank Solich would like to get some snaps for Newcombe during a game, "if you get to where you're comfortable with a lead," he said recently.

But barring an injury to Eric Crouch, that isn't likely to happen in the first half of a game.

"I've never been comfortable with a lead in the first half," said Solich. "I've never seen a lead that's been big enough (in the first half). So it's a little bit of a tough call along those lines.

"But ideally, you'd like to have Bobby in some games get a few reps so that if Eric goes down, Bobby has not only had some practice reps but he's also had some game reps."

PENALTIES, PENALTIES, PENALTIES

Nebraska Coach Frank Solich has been looking for a reduction in penalties, after being penalized 42 times for 395 yards in the first six games. "The penalty deal is still somewhat frustrating, I think, for all of us," he said before the Iowa State game. "We have not shown we're as disciplined as we need to be.

"I was hoping to have it show that we were making progress, but that did not occur. So we'll look to this week to be making progress. But as of yet, we've not shown signs of getting better."

The Cornhuskers were on pace to be Nebraska's most penalized team during the 1990s.

The 1994 national championship team was penalized 76 times for 670 yards in 12 regular-season games, while the 1995 national championship team was the least penalized Nebraska team during the 1990s, drawing only 47 penalties for 434 yards in 11 regular-season games.

Solich admitted being unable to explain the problem. "We have officials come out to our practices extensively throughout the season," he said. "We have, at the very least, twice a week where we have a full crew of officials out there, flagging everything we do. And so we're trying."

REGENTS APPROVE BASEBALL, SOFTBALL STADIUMS

The University of Nebraska Regents have approved a joint venture between the City of Lincoln, NEBCO, Inc., and the University of Nebraska, to build a new \$29.5 million baseball/softball complex.

University of Nebraska Director of Athletics Bill Byrne announced that the University will raise \$10.6 million toward the project to give the Husker baseball and softball teams one of the finest playing facilities in the Big 12 Conference and the nation. The complex will be located just north of the Haymarket district near downtown, west of Memorial Stadium and near Sixth and Charleston streets.

"This stadium is going to be better than anything I could've imagined," NU baseball Coach Dave Van Horn said. "When I was hired, I was expecting maybe a 2-3 million dollar renovation of Buck Beltzer Stadium, but this is going to give us one of the best facilities in the Midwest."

Van Horn, who led the Huskers to the 1998 Big 12 Tournament Championship and the school's first NCAA Tournament appearance since 1985, said the new facilities will be a great recruiting advantage.

"This has been the No. 1 question everyone around the state has asked me," Van Horn said. "I have never been able to really answer it until now. Our kids now realize that we are going to be someone to contend with every year, and we are going to keep the Midwestern kids here."

The Husker baseball team will receive a 4,400 to 5,000 seat stadium, while head softball coach Rhonda Revelle and the softball team will be the recipient of a 2,000 to 2,500 seat softball stadium. The complex, which has yet to be named, will also have one or two practice fields, as many as 2,000 parking stalls for university use and a walkway linking the facility to campus and downtown.

SOCCER TEAM CLINCHES BIG 12 TITLE

Becky Preston and Meghan Anderson combined for two goals, giving the Nebraska women's soccer team its second Big 12 regular-season title with a 3-1 victory at Oklahoma Oct. 22. Preston scored off an assist from Anderson, and Anderson later scored on an assist from Preston. ■

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Winning Immediately Is Husker Goal

Sophomore guard Cochran says the NIT is no longer an acceptable destination



Mike BABCOCK

THE BEGINNING of preseason practice is always a time of optimism, of lofty goals. A team's potential can seem unlimited, the plans for the season unimpeachable.

So it was, and still is, for the Nebraska men's basketball team, which has been bolstered by a recruiting class described by Coach Danny Nee as "the best we've ever had."

"No question about that," he said during his preseason news conference.

"Talent-wise it's the best we've ever had. And the minute the fans and you see it, it's (going to be) obvious."

The class includes five scholarship players, junior college transfers Steffon Bradford, Danny Walker and Kimani Ffriend and freshmen Brian Conklin and Kenny Booker.

George Mazyck, another junior college transfer, would have been a sixth but suffered a knee injury that apparently has ended his career at Nebraska before it ever started.

Conklin is slated for a redshirt season. But the others will play.

"All of them," said Nee. "I need them all."

He needs them because time is of the essence. "Absolutely," he said.

"There's no question we have to win and win immediately. And that's the goal."

Nee didn't mean "win" as in winning record. He has accomplished that. Nebraska has had winning records in 11 of his 13 seasons, including seven with 20 victories or more. The Cornhuskers also have advanced to post-season play for a school-record nine consecutive seasons.

But four of those nine have been the National Invitation Tournament. And that's no longer an acceptable destination, according to sophomore guard Cary Cochran.

"The term 'NIT' is starting to be kind of a profanity to me," Cochran said during the preseason news conference. "I don't even want to say that. I mean, I went through it last year and I don't want to be there again. I witnessed being in the NCAA, and I don't see with who we have on our team, (that) we shouldn't be thinking this is what we have to be year in and year out."

Cochran was a redshirted freshman in 1998, when the Cornhuskers were eliminated by Arkansas, 74-65, in the first round of the NCAA Tournament at Boise, Idaho.

He tied a school record by hitting 7-of-9 3-point shots and scored a career-high 23 points in a 101-89 loss at

Texas Christian in the second round of the NIT last season.

He much preferred the NCAA Tournament to the NIT. "I don't think as a program, you should credit yourself or try to run your program on making the NIT every year," he said.

"For some teams that may be the post-season that they want to at least get to."

But in his opinion, Nebraska shouldn't be among them. "This is a real critical year for us," he said. "We have to get established that we're going to the NCAA every year."

Not only do the Cornhuskers have to get to the NCAA Tournament, they have to win. Nebraska has never won an NCAA Tournament game in six trips, five of them under Nee.

"With the new people coming in, we think we've got a chance," said Nee.

The Cornhuskers also should have a chance to be contenders in the Big 12, as they were last season when they finished tied for fifth after being a position down the stretch to win the title.

The newcomers, like veterans Cochran, Cookie Belcher, Larry Florence, Louis Truscott and Rodney Fields (who is coming off an injury redshirt), "want the same things that I want," Nee said. "We want to win a championship. I think the talent and desire is there."

The status of Belcher remains in doubt because of his healing right wrist, however. And "I think that might be, in all honesty, our No. 1 concern right now," said Cochran.

"I mean, he's obviously one of the best defensive players in the country, one of the best players in the conference. We're only going to go so far as Cookie can take us. I think the difference in us being an unbelievably great team and us being a good team would ride on a right

wrist, so to speak."

A good team might end up in that other post-season tournament.

"We want to be in the NCAA Tournament," Cochran said. "And I'm not going to lie; we want to get to the Sweet 16. Guys on our team are talking about it. We don't just want to run through the year, have a good conference year and then end up playing in that tournament we did last year." ■



Cary Cochran was a redshirt when Nebraska faced Arkansas in the 1998 NCAA Tournament.

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at mdb@inetnebr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

Fighting Through The Adversity

Solich says senior tackle Julch's performance on and off the field make him a role model



Bob SCHALLER

ADAM JULCH plays the percentages. Well, he actually plays despite the percentages.

This season, his foot and arm are far from 100 percent, and last year his ankle was less than 50 percent healed, yet it didn't keep him out of the lineup. He was zero percent for spring ball — back spasms kept him down and rehabbing the ankle following surgery after the bowl loss to Arizona kept him out.

So it's fair to say Julch hasn't been 100 percent for 90 percent of the time he's been a starter. But unlike some arm-chair quarterbacks who offer their coaching tips on the radio airwaves, it's unfair — and not accurate — to say that Julch has ever given less than 100 percent effort.

The fifth-year senior from Omaha Burke has gotten better each year. His improved his "pancake" total — the number of times he knocked a player to the ground — from .8 in 1996 to .9 in 1997. Last season, he improved more than 400 percent in that area with an average of 4.8 pancakes per game, including a season-high nine against both Louisiana Tech and Washington.

He's also been a nearly 90-percent-plus performer in the classroom. He has a 3.25 grade point average majoring in math and economics, and is a two-time first-team Academic All-Big 12 selection. He's earned 100 percent for his off-the-field activities, serving as a keynote speaker at the Sidney Tour of Excellence, and he also volunteers his time with the D.A.R.E. program.

"He's done everything we've asked," Coach Frank Solich said, "as a player and as a person. He's a role model as a student-athlete."

Those are high marks from the head teacher — er, uh, head coach. Julch is also held in high regard by his teammates, who bristle at the criticism they hear leveled at their leader.

"He's the biggest part of our line," center Dominic Raiola said. "He's such a leader. He's played through some injuries that would have kept a lot of guys off the field and in the training room. He doesn't complain about it — he doesn't even want attention for it. But what he's done with what he's had to deal with is amazing."

And what does Julch make of the criticism?

"Everyone is entitled to their opinion," Julch says, shrugging his formidable shoulders. "The fans and those others who criticize don't really understand how the game is played — the technique and responsibilities. They might not understand that we don't have 400 yards rushing a game because of what the defense is doing and we might throw the ball more, which certainly brings down the rushing total. I'd love for us to get to where we're getting 400 yards

a game (on the ground) and wearing defenses down from pounding it at them play after play. But if it's a choice between leading the nation in rushing or winning, I'll take the wins."

At 6-foot-5 and 320 pounds, the red-haired Julch is 100 percent intimidating in person. But he is generous with his time and thoughts. He takes time and reflects to provide insightful, articulate answers. While he'll concede that the criticism "sometimes hurts," he says he never thought about stepping aside because of either that or the injuries.

"Leave the team? Never," Julch said. "I'm a team player, and I always will be. That's just how I was brought up."

But the injuries coming at a constant pace . . . the surgeries that slowed him and forced him to adjust everything from his daily schedule to his workouts — didn't that wear him down at least as much emotionally as it did physically?

"I was taught," Julch said, "to fight through the adversity."

Though the Huskers have been impressive and even had three backs rush for 99 or more yards each against Iowa State, Julch was quick to point out that the offensive line shouldn't get all the credit. In fact, the offensive line — which shoulders the public blame when the running game struggles — isn't always at fault, though Julch would never say that because he seems to have a built-in mechanism that prevents making excuses.

"Our defense is what has done the great job this year — those guys and the coaches are just

amazing," Julch said. "Our running backs are doing a good job of seeing the holes. (Quarterback) Eric Crouch has just been outstanding. There's a kid with courage."

Indeed, while the entire state has fallen in love with the gutty effort and attitude Crouch brings to each game, he has no bigger fan than the line blocking for him. In fact, Raiola and Julch were wearing baseball caps that read "Crouch" and had his number 7 within a football. So where did the hats come from?

"Well, I think we got them from . . ." Raiola started to say, before looking at Julch — perhaps this was some top-secret information that should not be divulged.

"They fell from the sky," Julch said. "We're just standing there, and all of the sudden, we have these hats."

Raiola nodded in agreement. With 12 1/2 feet of height and 620 pounds between them, it didn't seem like the point was worth pressing.

So the answer might have been low in terms of what percentage was truth. But the delivery was 100 percent effective. ■



Adam Julch is in his second season as a starting offensive tackle.

Bob Schaller covers the Huskers for the Scottsbluff Star-Herald. He has also written several books, including "Touchdown Tommie" and "Roar of Silence: The Kenny Walker Story." Bob can be reached at schallerrc@aol.com.

Big 12 Teams Battling For Bowls

The conference is guaranteed six spots and could get seven



Curt McKeever

YOU WANT A REALLY FUN JOB? Try being a bowl representative.

Other than wearing one of those dorky-looking, brightly-colored jackets, I can't think of any drawbacks.

You pick a college game to attend, show up hours before kickoff to hand out brochures and those little stick-on emblems that writers plaster to their computers and then afterward tell everyone how great it would be to have the Cornhuskers,

Wolverines (insert nickname) and all their fans invade your city for a week in December or January.

How tough can that be?

It's kind of like being a golf coach. You remind everyone when tee times are, tell them to arrive on time, throw in a little coaching tip like "Keep your head down" and then go work on your chipping until the players make the turn.

OK, so what's any of this have to do with late October? Well, it's time to start paying closer attention to those bowl reps, and where they're going.

The Big 12 Conference has six guaranteed bowl slots, and possibly seven.

By now, we know Nebraska, Kansas State, Texas A&M and probably Texas are headed for the postseason. That leaves two (maybe three) spots open, and Iowa State is looking like a serious player.

The league could get a seventh spot if one of its members end up playing for the national championship in the Sugar Bowl. Otherwise, the Big 12 champion is committed to the Fiesta Bowl. But if the champ is headed to the Sugar Bowl, the league will try to get the Fiesta Bowl to take another member.

The best chance of that happening would be if Nebraska keeps rolling through its schedule, or if Kansas State can make a jump in the Bowl Championship Series rankings and beat the Cornhuskers.

Bowls with Big 12 tie-ins after the Fiesta, in proper selection order are: Cotton, Holiday, Alamo, Insight.Com and Independence.

So where's everybody headed?

Let's take an early guess.

One team that looks headed for early recruiting is Colorado. The Buffaloes are, by far, the most disappointing team in the league. Ranked 15th in the preseason Associated Press poll, CU got trampled out of the gate by Colorado State and has been running uphill ever since.

The real puzzler about this team is what happened to its defense? Last year, CU was 13th in total defense. With the majority of those players back, the Buffs were hovering in the 80s a couple of weeks ago, giving up 39 points to Missouri and 31 to Texas Tech, neither of which could be confused with a high-powered offensive team.

Gary Barnett needs a quarterback and some running backs, but you can bet his off-season priority will center on the defense.

Another team that figured to be more dominant is Texas A&M. The Aggies have almost everyone back from last year's league champion but have struggled to run the ball consistently. Part of that might be because A&M is loaded with big-play receivers, and quarterback Randy McCown is having a solid senior season. But one-dimensional will, at best, land A&M in Dallas or San Diego for the holidays.

Kansas State has been the league's most pleasant surprise. Everyone thought the Wildcats would struggle without Michael Bishop. And while Jonathan Beasley isn't going to take them on a trip to Bourbon Street by himself, K-State's defense is giving its offense plenty of good field position and opponents are falling rather easily.

Look for Beasley (or whoever's playing quarterback) to try and burn the Huskers with a couple of deep throws, then turn the game over to the D.

Besides Iowa State, the feel-good story of the season has been Texas Tech.

Coach Spike Dykes is rumored to be out, but he's making it dang tough on the people making that decision. Tech inexcusably lost to North Texas at home but bounced back by beating A&M, then after running into a buzzsaw at Oklahoma State, whipped Colorado. A Nov. 6 home game against Iowa State looks like it could go a long way toward deciding both team's Decembers.

That leaves Oklahoma and Oklahoma State.

Before the Sooners played Texas in the Cotton Bowl, plenty of media were talking about an OU-Nebraska matchup for the Big 12 championship. OU then blew a 17-0 lead and lost to slip back to fringe-bowl status.

The Sooners appear to have problems on defense, but part of that is the offense's doing. It seems like it's either been a quick-strike score or a three-and-out series for Oklahoma.

Their Nov. 27 home game against Oklahoma State will mean something this year. The Cowboys are making do without injured quarterback Tony Lindsay, relying on a physical defense to carry the load while the offense comes along. Oklahoma State looked like definite bowl material while mashing Texas Tech in early October and should come rolling into Norman riding high after facing Baylor and Kansas the previous two weeks. The Cowboys also play Texas in Stillwater to start the month.

So, will it be six bowls or seven for the Big 12?

Either way, the league will have no problem finding eligible clubs. ■

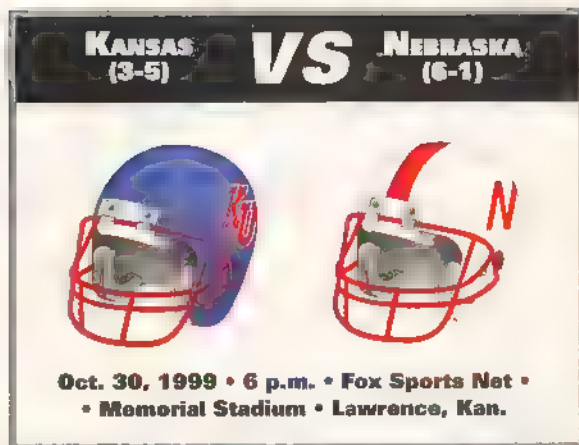


Gary Barnett's Colorado Buffaloes have been disappointing.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter, covering the University of Nebraska for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams.

Jayhawks Flying After 21-0 Win

Goal posts come down after shutout of Missouri ends five-game conference skid



It's quite possibly the most unexpected part of Kansas' preparations for Nebraska but also possibly the most satisfying.

Before the Jayhawks play host to Nebraska the night before Halloween, the goal posts at Memorial Stadium in Lawrence will have to be replaced.

Kansas not only won the 108th edition of the border war with Missouri but won convincingly 21-0 to end a five game Big 12 Conference losing streak.

KANSAS				
Record 3-5				
28	@ Notre Dame	L	48-13	
11	Co. St. N. ridge	W	71-14	
18	@ Colorado	L	51-17	
25	San Diego St.	L	41-13	
2	SMU	W	27-9	
9	@ Kansas St.	L	50-9	
16	@ Texas A&M	L	34-17	
23	Missouri	W	21-0	
30	Nebraska			
1	Baylor			
13	@ Oklahoma St.			

NEBRASKA				
Record 6-1				
1	@ Missouri	W	42-7	
11	Co. St. N. ridge	W	45-0	
14	So. Missouri	A	20-13	
25	@ Missouri	A	40-10	
2	Oklahoma St.	A	34-14	
9	Iowa St.	W	43-14	
23	Co. Texas	L	24-20	
30	@ Kansas			
1	Kansas St.			
13	Kansas St.			
28	@ Colorado			

cutback . . . But I doubt Missouri wanted to hit him anyway, as big and strong as he is."

The Jayhawks were so injury-depleted at tailback that Norris was installed as the feature back against Kansas State. He responded with 40 yards and a touchdown in nine carries.

Norris had nine carries for 19 yards and a touchdown against A&M before his breakout game against Missouri.

"I learned a whole lot about the position from (tailbacks) Mitch Bowles

Tentative 2 Deeps

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

SE	3	Matt Dawson**	6-1	180	Jr.
	9	Wilson Thomas	6-5	210	Fr.
LT	89	Adam Juich**	6-5	320	Sr.
	68	Jon Rutherford*	6-3	295	So.
LG	63	James Sherman***	6-4	295	Sr.
	77	Ton u Fonot	6-4	330	Fr.
C	54	Dominic Ralo*	6-2	295	So.
	51	Matt Baldwin**	6-2	295	Sr.
RG	55	Russ Hochstein**	6-3	280	Fr.
	64	Steve Alstadt	6-5	275	So.
RT	58	Devo Voik*	6-5	295	So.
	75	Kyle Kolmogorov*	6-5	280	So.
TE	85	T. J. DeBates***	6-3	250	Sr.
and	87	Tracey Watrom	6-5	220	So.
QB	7	Eric Crouch*	6-1	195	So.
	14	Jeff Perino*	6-2	210	Sr.
FB	15	Will e Miller**	6-1	240	Jr.
	35	Tyrone Uhler	6-0	230	Fr.
B	38	Dan Alexander**	6-0	245	Fr.
	36	Correl Buckhalter**	6-0	225	Jr.
WB	82	Sean Applegate**	5-9	185	Sr.
and	12	Bobby Newcombs**	6-0	195	Jr.
PK	26	Josh Brown	6-2	185	Fr.

Nebraska Database					
IN	3	Aaron Wells**	6-2	185	Jr.
	4	Chris Kelley	6-2	185	Jr.
INT	5	Steve Watson**	6-2	185	Jr.
	6	Jason Johns	6-2	185	Jr.
	7	Loran Kaiser**	6-2	185	Jr.
	8	Matt McGinnis	6-2	185	Jr.
	9	Kyle Vanden Bo	6-2	185	Jr.
	10	Dominic Adams	6-2	185	Jr.
	11	Tony Ortiz	6-2	185	Jr.
	12	Shawn Shaw**	6-2	185	Jr.
	13	Chris Cook	6-2	185	Jr.
	14	Jamie Burrow	6-2	185	Jr.
	15	Rikus Jac	6-2	185	Jr.
	16	Eric Johnson	6-2	185	Jr.
	17	Kevin Craver	6-2	185	Jr.
	18	DeJuan Groom	6-2	185	Jr.
	19	Clint Finley	6-2	185	Jr.
	20	Dion Booker	6-2	185	Jr.
	21	Mike Brown	6-2	185	Jr.
	22	Joe Walker	6-2	185	Jr.
	23	Ralph Brown**	6-2	185	Jr.
	24	Jeff Hemie	6-2	185	Jr.
	25	Dan Hadenfeldt	6-2	185	Jr.

In the celebration that followed, Kansas students tore down both goal posts and carried them off to Potter Lake.

The Jayhawks, who were coming off back-to-back road losses to Big 12 powers Kansas State and Texas A&M, are 3-5 overall and 3-1 at home after the confidence-building victory.

"This makes up for a whole lot," fullback Moran Norris told the Kansas City Star. "To beat Missouri . . . this is a big win. Now, we'll be motivated going into next week when we play Nebraska."

The Cornhuskers quite likely will be an angry bunch after suffering their first loss at Texas.

BIG BACK BREAKS OUT

Norris, a 245-pound junior, rushed 18 times for a career-high 106 yards and two touchdowns against Missouri.

"With the physical nature of his running style, he was was a difference-maker," KU Coach Terry Allen said. "He has surprised me how well he's done the last three weeks."

The converted tight end, who entered the game with career rushing statistics of 25 carries for 79 yards, scored on a 23-yard sweep in the second quarter.

"My first thought was, 'Does he have the speed to get around the corner?' " junior running back David Winbush said. "And he did. Then, that

Tentative 2 Deeps

KANSAS DEFENSE				
SE	1	Dion Johnson	6-1	180
	2	James Bonds	6-1	180
	3	Nate Dwyer	6-1	180
	4	John Williams	6-1	180
	5	Dion Rayford	6-1	180
	6	Jeremy Hanak	6-1	180
	7	Kyle Atkinson	6-1	180
	8	Chaz Murphy	6-1	180
	9	Charles Lomax	6-1	180
	10	Marcus Rogers	6-1	180
	11	Andrew LeBlanc	6-1	180
	12	Tim Lower	6-1	180
	13	Tim Lower	6-1	180
	14	Chaz Murphy	6-1	180
	15	Quincy Roe	6-1	180
	16	Jahmal Wright	6-1	180
	17	George Jones	6-1	180
	18	Rad Nasmith	6-1	180
	19	Kareem High	6-1	180
	20	Silal Cook	6-1	180
	21	Andrew Davidson	6-1	180
	22	M. Abdul-Rahim	6-1	180
SE	23	Joey Pollard	6-1	180

KANSAS OFFENSE

SE	1	Harrison Hill	5-11	190	So.
82	Antion Pa ge	5-6	205	Fr.	
LT	71	John Odonotto	6-5	290	Jr.
70	Gabe Rosal's	6-5	275	Fr.	
LG	73	Damson Hunt	6-2	310	Jr.
68	Chris Enneking	6-4	280	Sr.	
C	88	Chris Enneking	6-4	280	Sr.
56	Bob Schmidt	6-2	280	Jr.	
RG	68	Marc Owen	6-3	325	Jr.
78	Chuck Jarvis	6-8	300	Jr.	
RT	75	Justin Harwig	6-4	290	So.
54	Adam Miller	6-5	250	So.	
TE	88	David Hurst	6-3	245	Fr.
85	Sean McDermott	6-4	250	Sr.	
QB	4	Dylan Smith	6-1	190	Fr.
14	Zac Wegner	6-2	220	Sr.	
HB	20	Mitch Bowles	5-8	190	Sr.
or	22	David Winbush	6-7	180	Fr.
FB	33	Moran Norris	6-2	245	Fr.
36	Tyrus Fontenot	5-8	230	Sr.	
FL	86	Michael Chandler	6-0	185	Sr.
84	Agan Williams	6-1	190	Fr.	
PK	30	Joe Garcia	5-11	175	Jr.

PICKS

Byron Hill
Editor

Nebraska 58, Kansas 10

Only bad weather could slow the Huskers in this mismatch. Many Nebraskans remember the October storm two years ago on the night Nebraska played in Lawrence. This game might be just as ugly. The Jayhawks have played well, just not often.

Mike Babcock Contributing Editor Nebraska 42, Kansas 6

The outcome of the game isn't in question. This has been a tough season for the Jayhawks, and it isn't going to get any better at Nebraska's expense. A concern for Cornhusker fans is that they don't return home to find the destruction of another early snow storm such as happened two years ago.

Bob Schaller Contributing Writer Nebraska 48, Kansas 13

Where have you gone, Glen Mason? With the way the things have gone for Kansas, you'd think its mascot is a black cat. This is a team that doesn't have a very good offense, or a very good defense. Nebraska has way too much on defense for Kansas, and probably too much on offense to keep the remote out of the television audience's hand past halftime. Still, sandwiched between the three toughest games of Nebraska's season, the Huskers could be caught off guard... just kidding.

Terry Douglass Grand Island Independent Sports Editor Nebraska 56, Kansas 17

The final breather for the Cornhuskers this season will come against the Jayhawks in Lawrence, Kan. Kansas is improved thanks to personnel moves by head coach Terry Allen, and the Jayhawk offense showed some life against Texas A&M. However, Nebraska is simply too focused to let KU hang around for very long.



Junior David Winbush, who has been slowed by a knee injury, rushed for 67 yards against Missouri.

and David Winbush," Norris said. "I spent a lot of time looking at those guys in practice. I tried to watch their footwork

QUARTERBACK LEARNING

Another Jayhawk learning on the job is junior quarterback Dylon Smith., a highly regarded transfer from Santa Monica (Calif.) Community College.

"It's a struggle when you're losing," Smith said last week. "I wanted to learn the plays a lot faster, and it was frustrating. I wanted to know everything, and I wanted to help the team out."

Smith completed 7 of 14 passes for 135 yards against Missouri. Included was a 62-yard scoring pass to sophomore split end Harrison Hill, who had five catches for 122 yards, his second 100-yard game of the season.

"We're starting to get our timing down," Smith said. "Everything is starting to come together as a team. We've just got to put 60 minutes together. If we do that, then I think everything will be OK."

For the season, Smith has completed 91 of 172 passes for 1,051 yards and nine touchdowns. His 35-yard run against Kansas State is the Jayhawks' longest run from scrimmage this season.

INJURY WOES

Smith's development has been hindered by the Jayhawks' injury prob-

lems. The loss of speedy wideouts Termaine Fulton and Byron Gassaway to season-ending injuries took away most of the team's ability to stretch defenses. Running backs Winbush (knee) and Henri Childs (turf toe) have also been slowed.

The injury problems leave Allen looking ahead to next season.

"When we get everybody back, that should really be fun," he said.

Starting linebacker Dariss Lomax left the Missouri game in the first quarter with a knee injury, and cornerback Andrew Davison suffered a concussion in the third quarter. Neither injury was believed to be serious.

DEFENSE IMPROVES

The Kansas defense, which was done in by big plays the previous two weeks, didn't allow a pass longer than 20 yards or a running play longer than 15 in holding the Tigers to 217 total yards.

KU entered the game ranked 106th among the nation's 114 Division I-A teams in yards allowed. The Jayhawks finished with four sacks and eight tackles for losses.

"It's all emotion," said KU defensive end Dion Johnson, who had two of the Jayhawks' sacks. "I'm a senior. We already lost to K-State. This is our second rivalry. We gave it all we had."

Kansas had struggled against the pass, and Allen started two different defensive backs against Missouri — Carl Nesmith and Muhammad Abdul-Rahim — in an effort to shake up the secondary.

The Jayhawks also made a commitment to run more zone blitzes, leaving their defensive backs in safer zone coverages.

"I didn't think we'd shut 'em out," Allen said, "but I thought we could put some pressure on 'em."

KICKING WOES

Probably the biggest negative for the Jayhawks against Missouri was their kicking game. Junior place-kicker Joe Garcia missed two field goals and had an extra-point attempt blocked. He has connected on just two of his last 10 field-goal tries.

"We have some definite problems in field-goal kicking and PATs," Allen said. "That's something we'll work hard to correct."

Punter Joey Pelfanio fared much better, averaging 40.4 yards for eight punts on a windy day ■

H O O K E D

*Texas fight
song grim
reminder for
mistake-prone
Huskers*



GAME RECAP

Story by Mike Babcock
Photos by David Deardorff

As they trudged off the field and into the visitors' locker room at Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium, the Nebraska football players had to listen to "The Eyes of Texas."

They were forced to go single-file



The football comes loose as Nebraska I-back Correll Buckhalter struggles to reach the goal line early in the fourth quarter. Texas tackle Casey Hampton recovered at the Longhorn 2.

into the narrow entry and had little choice.

Jubilant Texas fans pushed together above the entry, singing and signaling Hook 'em Horns,

adding insult to the injury of the Cornhuskers' 24-20 upset loss. "Just hearing that fight song again walking off the field, it was a bad experience," said Cornhusker defensive

tackle Steve Warren.

Warren and his teammates endured the same song last season in Lincoln, when Texas ended their 47-game winning streak at Memorial



Sophomore Tracey Wistrom continued to provide big plays from his tight end position. He had two catches for 87 yards. For the season, he has 10 catches for 337 yards.

Stadium in similarly frustrating fashion, 20-17.

This time things were supposed to be different. The Cornhuskers were much improved.

"I think we're certainly a better football team in almost all phases, maybe all phases," Coach Frank Solich said at his weekly news conference on the Tuesday before the game.

"We're a more experienced football team. We're a much healthier football team. So when you add it all up, we're a better football team than what we were at this point in time last season."

But, he was quick to add: "I have

not seen any dropoff with Texas, either."

Even though Heisman Trophy winner Ricky Williams was gone, the Longhorns were better overall, according to Solich, who would have said that even if he hadn't thought it.

He almost certainly believed it, however. And given the comparable abilities of the two teams, he noted that the ability to take care of the ball likely would influence the game's outcome.

"It won't take much to sway it one way or the other," he said.

Solich's remarks were painfully prophetic for Nebraska, which had

positioned itself as a prime national championship contender with six consecutive victories.

The Cornhuskers were a minus-three in turnovers, losing three-of-five fumbles. "You can't turn the ball over against a good team and expect not to get stung by it," Solich said.

Nebraska's first lost fumble, by Crouch, came on its second play from scrimmage and gave the Longhorns' possession at the Nebraska 42-yard line. Though Texas was forced to settle for a 43-yard Kris Stockton field goal, the mistake established the tone for the afternoon.

The second lost fumble, also by

4TH & 1NCHES

Notes And Quotes From The Texas Game

Crouch, cost the Cornhuskers a scoring opportunity early in the second quarter. On a second-and-6 from the Texas 10-yard line, Crouch was pulled down by end Cedric Woodard for a 10-yard loss. The ball came loose, and Everick Walls recovered.

The Cornhuskers regrouped after the second lost fumble, however, and seemed as if they might finally take control of the game. But they had to settle for Josh Brown field goals on consecutive possessions, which reached the Texas 5-yard line and the Texas 15-yard line.

They kept the pressure on, taking possession at the Longhorns' 31-yard line with 1:12 remaining in the half, on a poor punt and Bobby Newcombe's 15-yard return, and scoring on two plays, a 26-yard pass from Crouch to Correll Buckhalter and a 5-yard run by Buckhalter.

Despite the mistakes, Nebraska led 13-3 at halftime.

But "it should have been more," said Solich.

And it needed to be more to avoid the upset.

Texas scored 14 third-quarter points and then responded to a Crouch touchdown on a 9-yard run with 7:52 remaining in the game with a four-play, 60-yard drive capped by a 17-yard pass from quarterback Major Applewhite to a determined, 6-foot-4, 260-pound tight end, Mike Jones.

"I just turned upfield, saw grass and went," Jones said of his second touchdown reception of the season. "I wasn't going to let anything disrupt me from getting into the end zone."

The touchdown pass was Applewhite's second of the game. The sophomore from Baton Rouge, La., completed 17-of-30 for 213 yards in the game, including 8-of-9 for 166 yards in the second half. He was not intercepted, and the Cornhuskers managed to sack him only once.

"We didn't hold our end of the deal up," said Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride, who tried to assume full responsibility for the Cornhuskers' defensive shortcomings. "I probably did as bad a job today as in my coaching career. I put our kids in a bind a couple of times."

"We shot ourselves in the foot a couple of times in the red zone."

The third quarter proved to be Nebraska's undoing.

"We had one of those third-quarter setbacks," McBride said. "I think

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

The Nebraska-Texas series has been brief but memorable, and this year's game was no different. The Cornhuskers had positioned themselves in the national championship race.

But "we might be out of it right now," tight end Tracey Wistrom said.

Texas now leads the series 4-3 and is 1-1 in games played at Austin. The only other time the Cornhuskers have played here was in 1960, when Coach Bill Jennings' next-to-last team upset No. 4-ranked Texas 14-13 in the season-opener for both teams. Nebraska moved into the Associated Press rankings the next week, at No. 12, but lost its next two games at home and finished 4-6.

After the next season, Jennings was finished.

A Jennings-coached team also played Texas in 1959 at Lincoln, winning 20-0. What made that game memorable was Jennings' use of a "tandem T" formation in the fourth quarter.

Jennings had two players line up behind the center, quarterback Tom Kramer and left halfback Pat Fischer, with the idea being that when the ball was snapped, the defense wouldn't know which player had the ball. The players ran in opposite directions, of course.

The first time Nebraska used the formation, Texas coach Darrell Royal began yelling "illegal." Referee Cliff Ogden told reporters afterward that he was "dumbfounded" by the formation, which was in fact illegal. Ogden visited the Cornhusker locker room after the game to explain that to Jennings, who vowed he would continue to use the formation. He did not however.

The Cornhuskers defeated Texas 19-3 in the 1974 Cotton Bowl game to cap Tom Osborne's first season as head coach. Texas upset Nebraska and dashed the No. 3-ranked Cornhuskers' national championship hopes, 37-27 in the first Big 12 playoff. And, of course, the Longhorns' ended Nebraska's 47-game home winning streak last season.

SHARED SUCCESS

Hall of Fame coach D.X. Bible played a part in the history of both programs. Bible coached at Nebraska from 1929 through 1936, compiling a 50-15-7 (.743) record, then accepted the job as football coach and athletic director at Texas. He coached the Longhorns from 1937 to 1946.

Even though he had been gone for four seasons, Bible played a significant role in the Cornhuskers' trip to the Rose Bowl following the 1940 season. Texas A&M was also being considered for a bid opposite Pacific Coast Conference champion Stanford. The Aggies were undefeated and untied going into their annual showdown with archrival Texas. But the Longhorns upset them 7-0.

Bible called the game "one of my most satisfying victories because it helped Nebraska."

BRIEFLY NOTED

— Texas has now won six consecutive games against teams ranked No. 3 in the Associated Press poll. The last time the Longhorns lost to a No. 3 ranked team was in 1965, against Arkansas.

— Nebraska's defense had allowed a combined 13 points to six opponents in the third quarter this season. Texas scored 14 points against the Cornhuskers in the third quarter.

— Nebraska led at halftime 13-3. It was the first time this season Texas had trailed at the half.

— Texas quarterback Major Applewhite completed 8-of-9 passes for 166 yards and two touchdowns in the second half. He completed 9-of-21 passes for 47 yards in the first half. "He's just a good quarterback," said Nebraska defensive tackle Steve Warren. "He gets the job done."

— Cornhusker quarterback Eric Crouch completed 12-of-20 passes for a career-high 204 yards.

— Texas Coach Mack Brown: "Turnovers were the key. I also felt that we played well defensively in the first half and forced two turnovers."

— Applewhite on the pass protection provided by his offensive line, which averaged 327 pounds per man: "Their (the Cornhuskers') defensive rush was just quitting and throwing their hands up."

— Nebraska's 70-player travel roster included five Texans: weakside linebacker Julius Jackson (Gainesville), free safety Clint Finley (Cuero), cornerback Keyuo Craver (Harleton), rover Joe Walker (Arlington) and rush end Justin Smith (Sherman).

— Attendance was 84,082, the largest in history at Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium. The previous record was 83,687, set last season against archrival Texas A&M.

— ESPN's GameDay program was telecast from Austin. ■

"We made big plays but probably not as many big plays as we needed to make."

— Frank Solich

we were out of sync a little bit. I know my play-calling was out of sync. I second-guessed myself a little too much.

"And when that happens, I don't feel comfortable."

The Cornhuskers shut down the Texas running game, allowing a net of only 17 rushing yards in the final three quarters. But they couldn't solve Applewhite's passing.

"I'll tell you what, he's a winner," free safety Clint Finley said.

"He's just a good quarterback," said Warren. "He gets the job done."

Despite the fumbles, Crouch also was able to get the job done, at times, by completing 12-of-20 passes for a career-high 204 yards and rush-



I-back Correll Buckhalter (36) looks for running room as guard Russ Hochstein provides support.

ing for 35 yards and the touchdown.

"I thought Eric played well, but probably was not quite on top of his

game," Solich said.

But, he added: "That comes down to a lot of things."

I-back Dan Alexander rushed for 137 yards, but Nebraska was inconsistent in running the ball against the Longhorns' big defensive front. Even though they "put a lot of people wide" to stop the option, "they were able to get some penetration and take away some of our inside game," said Solich.

"We made big plays but probably not as many big plays as we needed to make."

One of the big plays involved a lateral pass from Crouch to wing-back Bobby Newcombe, who then passed to split end Matt Davison for a 33-yard gain in the second field goal drive.

Another was a play-action pass from Crouch to a wide-open tight end Tracey Wistrom good for 38 yards to the Texas 7-yard line early in the fourth quarter, with Nebraska trailing 17-13.

Three plays later, however, Buckhalter lost a fumble at the Longhorns' 2-yard line.

That's how it went for Nebraska on an otherwise pleasant, though breezy, afternoon.

"The way I feel when I go out on the field is, the only way we're going to lose is if we make mistakes like we did today," Crouch said. "It's tough to take a loss like this."

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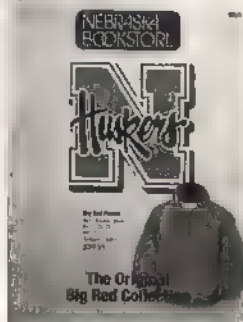
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BY THE NUMBERS

Nebraska vs. Texas
Oct. 23, 1999 • Austin, Texas

Score By Quarters

Nebraska	0	13	0	7	—	20
Texas	3	0	14	7	—	24

Team Stats

	NU	UT
First Downs	23	13
Rushing	11	3
Passing	9	10
Penalty	3	0
Rushing Attempts	51	27
Yards Gained Rushing	236	97
Yards Lost Rushing	44	35
Net Yards Rushing	192	62
Net Yards Passing	237	213
Passes Attempted	21	30
Passes Completed	13	17
Had Intercepted	0	0
Total Plays	72	57
Total Net Yards	429	275
Avg. Gain Per Play	6.0	4.8
Fumbles-Lost	5-3	2-0
Penalties-Yards	5-45	6-61
Punts-Yards	3-118	7-263
Avg. Per Punt	39.3	37.6
Punt Returns-Yards	5-47	1-8
Interceptions-Yards	0-0	0-0
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	1-1
Kickoff Returns-Yards	4-64	2-52
Possession Time	34:13	25:47

Scoring

UT — Kris Stockton 43-yard field goal
NU — Josh Brown 22-yard field goal
NU — Brown 32-yard field goal
NU — Correll Buckhalter 5-yard run (Brown kick)
UT — Chris Robertson 1-yard run (Stockton kick)
UT — Cavil 13-yard pass from Major Applewhite (Stockton kick)
NU — Eric Crouch 9-yard run (Brown kick)
UT — Mike Jones 17-yard pass from Applewhite (Stockton kick)
Att. — 84,082
Temp. — 77

Individual Leaders

NEBRASKA

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Alexander, D.	21	138	6.5	27	0
Crouch, E.	17	35	2.1	25	1
Buckhalter, C.	8	23	2.9	12	1
Miller, W.	4	0	0.0	2	0
Newcombe, B.	1	-2	-2.0	0	0

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	12-20-0	60.0	204	0
Newcombe, B.	01-10	100.0	33	0

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Davison, M.	4	82	15.5	33	0
Newcombe, B.	3	22	7.3	12	0
Wistrom, T.	2	87	43.5	49	0
Alexander, D.	2	28	12.5	22	0
Miller, W.	1	15	15.0	15	0

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	3	118	39.3	49

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Walker, J.	2	31	15.5	21	0
Newcombe, B.	2	16	7.5	15	0
Craver, K.	1	1	1.0	1	0

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Walker, J.	3	52	17.3	24	0
Wistrom, T.	1	12	12.0	12	0

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Brown, M.	7	1	8	1-6	0	0
Foley, C.	4	1	5	0	0	0
Warren, S.	3	2	5	2-9	0	0
Vanden Bosch, K.	3	1	4	1-2	0	0
Kaiser, L.	2	2	4	0	0	0
Johnson, E.	1	3	4	0	0	0
Craver, K.	2	1	4	0	0	0
Wills, A.	2	1	3	1-1	0	0
Brown, R.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Jackson, J.	1	1	2	1-3	0	0
Ortiz, T.	1	1	1	0	0	0
Burrow, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Polk, C.	1	0	1	1-8	0	1-8
List, G.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Booker, D.	0	1	1	0	0	0

TEXAS

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Mitchell, H.	20	83	4.2	33	0
Brown, R.	2	3	1.5	3	0
Robertson, C.	2	2	1.0	1	1
Jones, M.	1	6	6.0	0	0
Applewhite, M.	2	-20	-10.0	0	0

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Applewhite, M.	17-30-0	56.7	213	2

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Cavil, K.	8	84	10.5	27	1
Nunez, R.	3	54	18.0	39	0
Mitchell, H.	3	45	15.0	36	0
Jones, M.	1	17	17.0	17	1
Jones, J.	1	7	7.0	7	0
Flowers, M.	1	8	8.0	8	0

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Long, R.	6	219	36.5	45
Stockton, K.	1	44	44.0	44

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Garcia, C.	1	8	8.0	8	0

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Jones, J.	2	52	26.0	27	0

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Jackson, L.	8	6	14	1-1	0	0
Brown, G.	7	4	11	0	0	0
Rogers, S.	6	3	9	5-9	0	0
Lewis, D.	5	2	7	1-1	0	0
Humphrey, A.	5	1	6	2-8	0	0
Brooks, A.	3	3	6	1-7	0	1-7
Hill, E.	3	3	6	0	0	0
Woodard, C.	2	2	4	2-12	0	1-10
Ravels, E.	2	2	4	1-1	0	0
Jones, J.	2	1	3	0	0	0
Dillon, T.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Hicks, A.	0	3	3	1-1	0	0
Hampton, C.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Trahan, B.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Redding, C.	1	1	2	0	0	0
Jones, T.	0	2	2	0	0	0
Trissa, M.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Walker, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bobino, A.	0	1	1	0	0	0



I-back Dan Alexander rushed for 136 yards, a career-high total for the second straight game.

SEASON STATS

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPC	TD
Alexander, D.	7	89	509	72.7	4
Crouch, E.	7	83	365	55.0	9
Buckhalter, C.	6	61	360	60.0	5
Dedrick, D.	6	31	180	26.7	0
Miller, W.	5	27	114	19.0	1
Newcombe, B.	7	34	95	13.7	3
Evans, D.	2	19	74	37.0	0
Perrino, J.	5	12	54	10.8	0
Uhlir, T.	7	9	28	4.7	0
Kingston, B.	5	6	19	3.8	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Crouch, E.	7	45-77-3	58.4	813	8
Newcombe, B.	7	11-18-1	61.1	248	2
Perrino, J.	5	0-1-0	00.0	0	0
Christman, J.	2	0-4-0	00.0	0	0

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Davison, M.	7	18	280	15.6	40.0	2
Wistrom, T.	6	10	337	33.7	56.2	2
Newcombe, B.	7	8	101	16.8	14.4	2
Applewhite, S.	8	4	87	21.8	14.5	1
Alexander, D.	7	4	58	14.0	8.0	0
Miller, W.	6	3	26	8.7	4.3	0
OGleson, J.	5	2	19	9.5	3.8	0
London, F.	6	2	11	5.5	1.8	0
Crouch, E.	6	1	60	60.0	10.0	1

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Brown, J.	7	7	6	37

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG
Hadenfeldt, D.	33	1515	45.9	73

DEFENSE

Name	G	JT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Brown, M.	7	30	18	48	4-14	1-3	0
Polk, C.	7	15	27	42	6-31	0	3-25
Wills, A.	7	17	14	31	3-5	0	0
Ortiz, T.	7	13	12	25	5-19	0	2-15
Brown, R.	7	14	10	24	2-9	1-36	0
Craver, K.	7	18	5	23	2-3	2-18	0
Jackson, J.	7	8	14	22	6-20	3-40	2-15
Kaiser, L.	7	5	15	20	1-10	0	2-9
Warren, S.	7	8	12	20	6-29	0	2-12
Vanden Bosch, K.	6	10	9	19	6-38	0	2-22

TEAM STATISTICS		NU	OPP			
Total Offensive Yards		2,843	1,660			
Plays		468	448			
Average Per Play		6.1	3.7			
Average Per Game		406.1	237.1			
Net Rushing Yards		1,784	543			
Attempts		388	247			
TDs Rushing		22	4			
Net Passing Yards		1,059	1,117			
Completions		58	82			
Average Per Pass		10.6	5.0			
Average Per Catch		18.9	11.9			
Average Per Game		151.3	158.6			
TDs Passing		8	6			
Sacks By-Yards		23-170	12-83			
Fumbles Lost		26-11	13-9			
Penalties-Yards		47-440	53-402			
Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
NU	71	87	67	42	0	254
Opponents	10	3	27	42	0	82

SPEED

McBride: 'Effort guys' **key to measuring** **speed of defense**

By Mike Babcock

Speed is of the essence. And Nebraska's defense is definitely fast.

And not just in the secondary, where you'd expect to find the fastest players.

In fact, the way to measure the speed of a defense is to see if the tackles are around the ball, says Charlie McBride, a Cornhusker assistant for 23 years and defensive coordinator the last 18.

They're "usually the last guys who are supposed to get there," he

said. "But when you look at our defense, you'll always see some defensive lineman around a sweep or a play outside."

Steve Warren and Loran Kaiser, the starting defensive tackles, aren't likely to win many footraces with anyone else on defense. But they have a knack for getting to the ball. "Even though they're not flyers, they can get there quick through technique and knowing angles of pursuit," McBride said.

They also make plays because they give 100 percent every time the ball is snapped.

McBride calls such players "effort guys," and he uses a play from Nebraska's 31-30 loss against Miami in the 1984 Orange Bowl game to emphasize the importance of effort.

The play was the two-point con-

version attempt, a pass from quarterback Turner Gill intended for I-back Jeff Smith. A Miami defensive back tipped the ball, which glanced off Smith incomplete. Had the defender not tipped the ball, Nebraska would have won the game and a national title.

"It's only that inch or two that's the difference in winning a championship," McBride said.

"So your footwork, all of those little things are the difference between being a good team and a great team. We talk to the kids a little bit about 2 percent. You know, if you play 2 percent harder, a lot of times that's the difference between being a good football player and a great football player.

"You take all 11 guys and you play 2 percent harder, that's 22 per-



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cent. And that's a bunch."

The mathematics might require some clarification, but McBride's point is valid. Athletic ability, which the Cornhusker defense seems to have in abundance, must be enhanced with effort.

And the effort has been there this season. "This defense has tremendous work ethic. They appear to be very unified. And they play hard every snap," secondary coach George Darlington said.

"As coaches, we're very pleased with everything they're trying to do. Ultimately, that's all we can ask of them, the effort they give, the focus, playing together, being team-oriented."

Darlington, who is in his 27th season as a Nebraska assistant, was responding to a question about where this Cornhusker defense might rank among the others during his tenure.

Obviously, such a question depends on the context of an entire season.

"It's way too early to tell until you get against great challenges on

"You know, if you play 2 percent harder, a lot of times that's the difference between being a good football player and a great football player."

— Charlie McBride

offense and until you find out how many of your top players are going to make it through the season," said Darlington.

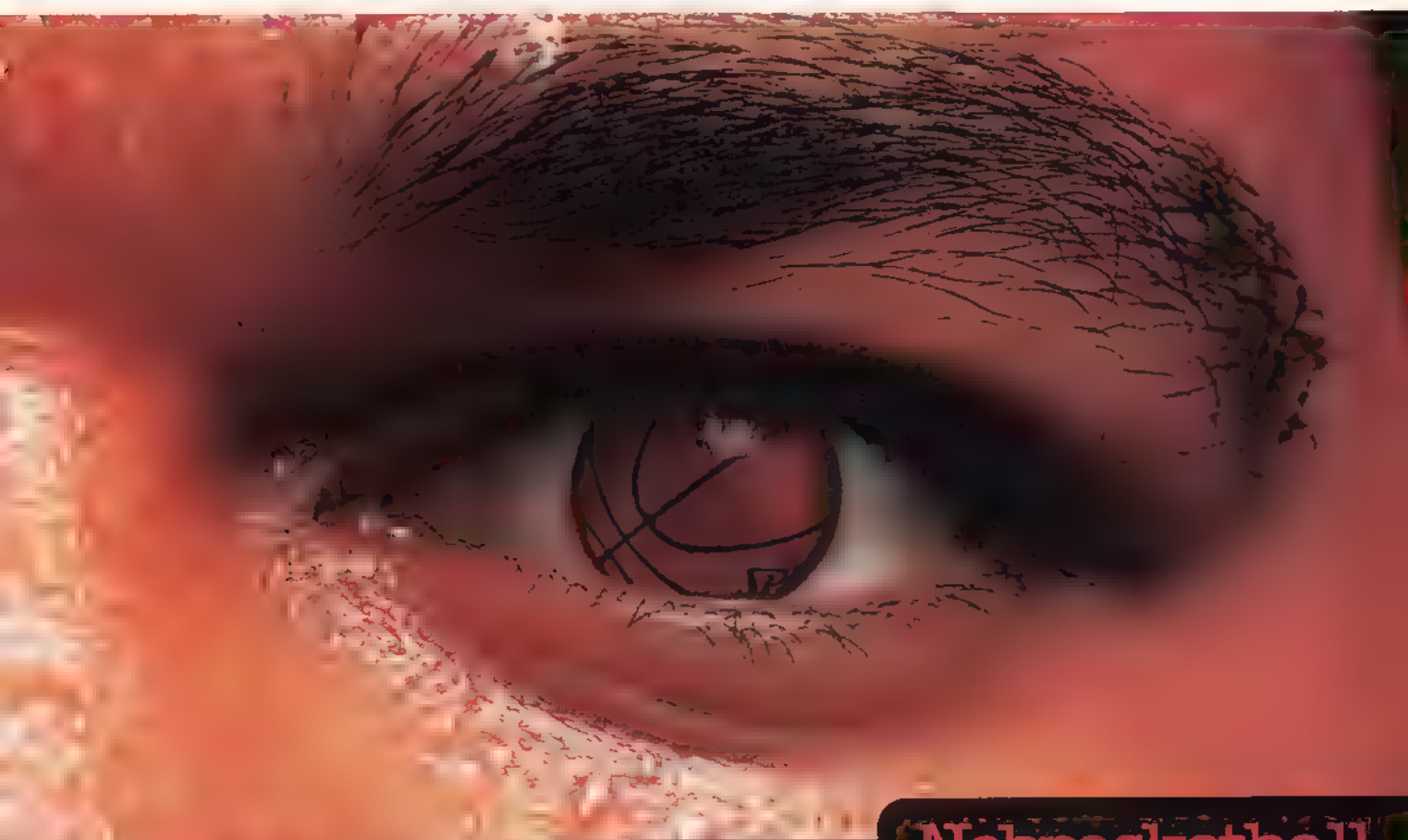
The best offensive teams all are on the second half of Nebraska's schedule, and Darlington's assessment came before the Texas game at Austin. So much may have changed.

Still, based on its play through the first six games, this season's defense would seem to have the potential, at least, to rank among the

best in Cornhusker history.

Statistically, Nebraska's best defense during Darlington's tenure was the one in 1984, which ranked first in the nation in total defense and scoring defense. The Cornhuskers have ranked first nationally in total defense in only one other season during the modern era (post-1946).

Bob Devaney's 1967 team also ranked first, allowing a school-record low 157.6 yards per game.



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Charlie McBride is in his 23rd season as a Nebraska assistant and 18th season as defensive coordinator.

Ironically, that team's 6-4 record tied for the worst in Devaney's 11 seasons as head coach.

Nebraska's other top-five finishes in total defense nationally since 1973, Darlington's first season, were in 1979 (No. 5), 1980 (No. 3), 1986 (No. 2), 1994 (No. 4) and 1997 (No. 5).

The 1984 defense was arguably the best, however. "It was very outstanding because we were not a juggernaut on offense that particular year," Darlington said. "That put more pressure on the defense than the year or two previously, when we scored 50-some points a game (on the average)."

The 1983 team averaged 52 points and 546.7 yards per game.

The defense in 1983 was young and inexperienced, however, and allowed an average of 368.3 yards per game, the most since such statistics have been, beginning in 1946.

The Cornhuskers also allowed a modern-record 218.9 passing yards per game in 1983. The next season, with most of the same players, they ranked fifth nationally (124.5/game).

Nebraska's defensive scheme is dramatically different now, of course. The Cornhuskers switched to a 4-3 base alignment and an aggressive, attacking philosophy in the early 1990s, after relying on a 5-2 base with a read-and-react approach throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

"We're not a complex defense in a lot of respects," said McBride, who succeeded Lance Van Zandt as defensive coordinator in 1982. "I think that we've tried to mix things up."

The most significant changes from week to week are in the blitzes. "We play a lot of different things," he said. "We play a combination of man and zone coverages. We've always kind of done that, just like an offense probably doesn't change its running game much."

"But they do change their passing game, and in some cases what we'll do is change our blitzes and the different areas where we're blitzing but try to keep the coverage somewhat similar."

"Sometimes you have to make a few adjustments. But as long as the coverage is pretty much the same, you may have your front people



coming from different directions each week.

"That's probably where you change the most. Some teams you can bring it up the middle against them. Some teams you've got to bring it from the outside, depending on what their passing scheme is. Usually each week we'll have something new, just like the offense will have something new."

"So it's sometimes a guessing game, really."

It's also a game of controlled emotion.

"It's kind of mayhem, in some ways, when the ball is snapped," McBride said.

"But you have to have your wits about you and know exactly what you're doing. I don't ever like to play defense where we're second-

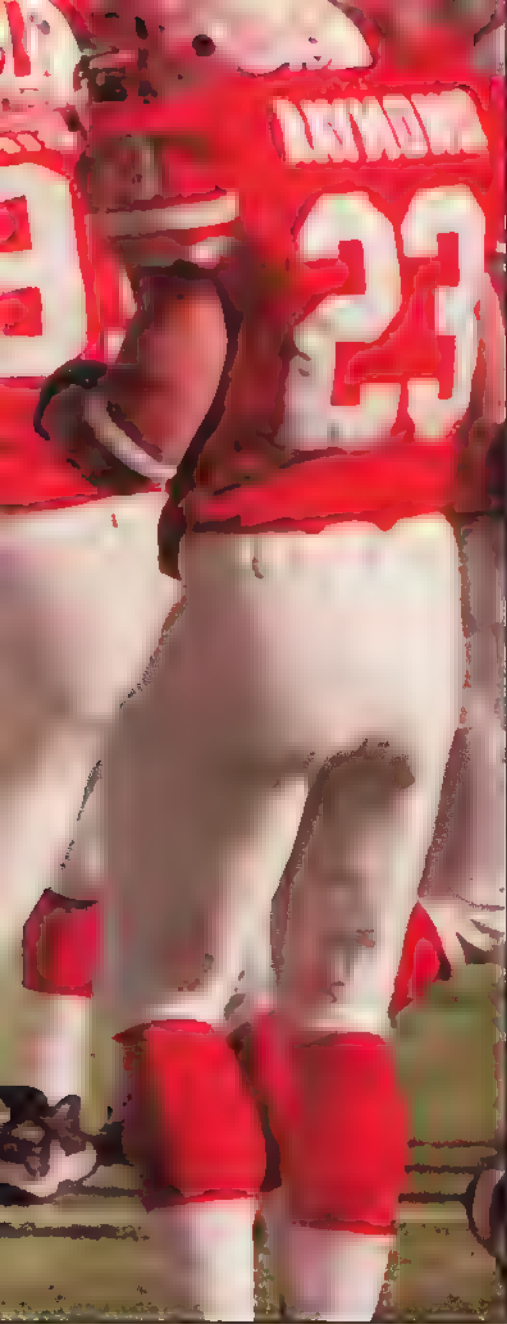
guessing ourselves, even when we're playing. If you're going to make a mistake, let 'er fly. I mean, go ahead, don't stop in the middle of something and say: 'Well, maybe I should or shouldn't.' I think that's where the confidence thing comes in."

"When you're ready to make your move, you do it."

"And no, it's not going to be 100 percent. But at least it's going to be fast."

And as mentioned earlier, the Blackshirts are, above all else, fast to the ball.

"Speed is definitely a factor," said Darlington, who sees the importance of that quality from a different perspective. "There are certain positions that if you don't have speed, then you have to radically change



No 'Senioritis' for NU Corner

The reality is, Nebraska has one of the best defenses in the Big 12.

That has been evident during the first half of the season.

The preseason perception among conference-area media representatives, however, was that the Cornhuskers didn't have the best defensive players. "You have to remember that we had only one preseason All-Big 12 pick," said defensive backs coach George Darlington.

"If you were writing about Kansas State, we'd be talking about four first-team All-Big 12 picks, and deservedly so. The perception of people around the conference is, we don't have those types of individuals. Whether ideas will change at the end of the season, hopefully they will."

The only Cornhusker defensive player on the preseason All-Big 12 first team was senior cornerback Ralph Brown, who has started every game in his college career.

Brown's inclusion was a no-brainer. He was a consensus first team all-conference pick as a sophomore and junior and a third-team Associated Press All-American last season.

Every time he breaks up a pass, he increases his own school career record. Six games into the season, he had 42, twice as many as Bret Clark, who is second on the list. Going into the Texas game, Brown had seven breakups this season and was fifth on the team in tackles with 21.

Despite his many accomplishments, "I think he's playing a little better this year than he played last year," said Darlington. "And that's all you can ask a player to do, just to improve your game a little bit more every year, if you're talking about an experienced player."

"If you're talking about a beginner, you want radical improvement for the simple reason of where they are and (the fact that) the base they're building on is different."

Brown was a beginner in 1996, when he became the first true freshman position player to start for the Cornhuskers since World War II. He proved to be a fast learner, setting what was at the time a record for pass



Ralph Brown was the only Husker on the preseason All-Big 12 first team.

breakups with 12, including a record seven against Colorado.

He revised the season record a year ago by breaking up 14 passes.

But even someone with Brown's resume "ought to improve," Darlington said.

"Because there's a thing called senioritis, which sometimes strikes players. Sometimes, for whatever reason, you have seniors who really aren't as good as they are as juniors."

A "classic example," based on statistics, said Darlington, was place-kicker Kris Brown, whose efficiency last season as a senior diminished from what it had been as a junior.

"It wasn't a matter of effort or anything," Darlington said. "But Kris Brown as a junior kicker was more productive than Kris Brown as a senior kicker. Sometimes that happens. And kicking is easy to evaluate because they either make the field goals or they don't make them."

Kris Brown is now making field goals for the NFL's Pittsburgh Steelers.

And he's "having a fabulous year," said Darlington.

Ralph Brown is having a pretty good year himself, better even than last season when he was Nebraska's only first-team All-Big 12 selection on defense. ■

your defense. That probably applies mostly to the secondary.

"We had some very good secondaries in the early 1980s. But we would be hard-pressed to do some of the things today with that group because our speed in the secondary is better, generally, though not at every position. Speed is a factor with what you feel comfortable doing."

Through the first half of the season, the Cornhuskers were able to do a lot defensively. But "I think the first five games on our schedule were (against) the weakest five offensive teams, with the exception maybe of Southern Mississippi, that we'll play," Darlington said.

That's why putting this defense in context must wait.

But it has a chance to rank with the best. ■

FLASHBACK

KU

Couldn't Stop Him

*Backup I-back
Johnson had
big games
against
Jayhawks in
1978, '79, '80*

By Bob Schaller

If it weren't for a rushing record that stands to this day, Craig Johnson would probably be better known to Kansas football historians than to those of his alma mater at Nebraska.

Johnson, a graduate of Omaha Westside who now owns and operates Johnson Realty in Omaha, was never really the featured I-back for Nebraska. But he was the feature presentation against the University of Kansas from 1978-80.

He still co-owns the longest rush from scrimmage for Nebraska, 94 yards, set against — who else? Kansas. It's a record he shares with Roger Craig.



Craig Johnson (30) is No. 35 on Nebraska's career rushing charts with 1,273 yards. As a sophomore in 1978, he rushed for 192 yards and scored three touchdowns against Kansas in Lawrence.

In 1978, Johnson, a fourth-team I-back behind I.M. Hipp, Rick Berns and Tim Wurth, headed to Lawrence with visions of just getting playing time. Yet the sight of Johnson quickly turned into a blur for the Jayhawks, as he rushed for 192 yards and scored three touchdowns in Nebraska's 63-21 route. Johnson, who carried 196 pounds on his 6-foot-1 frame, scored

on runs of 64 and 60 yards — and also caught a 78-yard screen pass from quarterback Tim Hager for a touchdown.

"It was kind of an interesting game because back then, Kansas wasn't probably regarded very highly as a football team," Johnson said. "We did have a three- or four-touchdown lead before I got to play. But when I got in,

everything they gave to me went for long yardage. That was maybe due as much to them not being good as it was our good execution. When you are as young as I was, you don't expect to get the ball that much. When big play after big play started happening, I thought, 'Hey, this is pretty cool.' It really was a thrill. We couldn't take many players on the trip — we had six backs including I-backs and fullbacks."

After the game, head coach Tom Osborne gave Johnson a hard time because Johnson, coming out of Westside, had visited Kansas and Nebraska before picking NU at the last minute.

"You must've put a little extra effort into this one," Osborne said, teasing Johnson.

"I got the chiding from all directions," Johnson recalls fondly. "KU did recruit me pretty heavily."

The following year, 1979, in Lincoln, Johnson changed his reputation from one-time Jayhawk assassin to "Kansas Killer." Jarvis Redwine was the starter, but Johnson drew the headlines from rushing nine times for 138 yards and two touchdowns, one of which came on a 94-yard run on an "iso" up the middle.

"We had the ball on the 2-yard line

"It's neat for me to step back and say, 'Wow, I was a part of that.'"

— Craig Johnson

and ran the iso, and I ran it out to the 6-yard line," Johnson said. "We ran the same play the next time."

Johnson broke through a wide-open hole and wasn't touched until the Kansas 20-yard line, when a Jayhawk defensive back dove and hit him in the back of the legs. It wasn't enough to bring Johnson down, and he dashed the final 20 yards to paydirt and Nebraska rolled to a 42-0 win.

"I didn't think about it being a record — it wasn't a big deal until the media interviews after the game when someone said it was a record," Johnson said. "As the years clicked by — a lot faster than I had hoped — and I came to realize it really was a big deal. That record gave me a lot of name recognition over the years."

The following year — Johnson's last — in Lawrence, Redwine had a thigh injury, so Johnson got the start. He made the most of it with two touch-

down runs and 109 rushing yards as the Huskers rolled, 54-0. That cemented the "Kansas killer" moniker that he carries to this day, and while he keeps only two pictures hanging in his house, one is of himself racking up yardage against Kansas. Johnson finished his career with 203 carries for 1,273 yards and 17 touchdowns.

"I feel very good about what happened in Lincoln during my time there," Johnson said. "As the years go by, you gained a little more pride. As a player, I was just glad to have the opportunity to play in college because I loved playing football. At that age, it lessons the magnitude of what you are a part of because you are on the inside."

"Looking at it now, with what Nebraska football means to so many people, the sea of red and what it all means to Husker fans, it's neat for me to step back and say, 'Wow, I was a part of that.'"

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TEAMS OF THE DECADE

Seventh
in a series
(1960-69)

Bob Devaney called Dennis Claridge (left) the best quarterback he ever coached. One of Claridge's favorite receivers was Tony Jeter (right), who tied for the team lead in receptions in 1963, with nine for 151 yards and one touchdown. That was his only touchdown pass, in fact, until the 39-28 loss against Alabama in the 1966 Orange Bowl game, in which he caught two.



Recruiting Was the Key to Dramatic Turnaround

*Devaney believed in
impressing parents*

By Mike Babcock

Bob Devaney never claimed to be much at singing. But occasionally it served a purpose.

Consider the recruitment of Tony Jeter, an All-America tight end and an outstanding two-way player before NCAA rules allowed a return to two-platoon football beginning in 1965.

On a recruiting visit to Jeter's home in Weirton, W.V., Devaney sat down on an organ bench beside Jeter's mom, who accompanied her church choir, and joined her in singing a couple of hymns.

"After one or two pieces, she'd had enough of my singing," Devaney once recalled.

She appreciated his effort, however,

so much so that her son became a Cornhusker.

Impress the parents, and the sons will follow. Devaney often used that approach in recruiting. And because of his Irish wit and charm, he could impress with the best of them.

The dramatic turnaround the Nebraska football program enjoyed under Devaney and his staff depended on recruiting. And though Devaney emphasized the importance of getting the best in-state players, he understood the need to recruit beyond Nebraska's borders.

The 1960s all-decade team reflects that. Fourteen of the 22 players came from outside the state.

Devaney, who was from Saginaw, Mich., and coached as an assistant to Duffy Daugherty at Michigan State, recruited heavily in the Big Ten territory with which he was familiar.

Weirton is located in the northern sliver of West Virginia, near Steubenville, Ohio, where Devaney

found Harry Wilson Freeman White and Sherwin Jarmon were from Detroit.

Wayne Meylan was from Bay City, Mich. Ted Vactor was from Washington, Pa. Walt Barnes was from Chicago. And LaVerne Allers was from Davenport, Iowa.

Langston Coleman was from Washington, D.C. He was among the Cornhuskers' first walkons, hitchhiking to Nebraska to try out for the team at the urging of Ted Sorenson, an administrative assistant to President John F. Kennedy and a University of Nebraska alum.

Coleman's mom worked in Sorenson's office.

Devaney's predecessor, Bill Jennings, also was regarded as a solid recruiter, having coordinated recruiting for Bud Wilkinson during the early seasons of Oklahoma's 47-game winning streak.

Devaney's immediate success at Nebraska was based on players

Huskies Illustrated
Team of the Decade, 1960-69

Offense

End	Freeman White (1963-64-65)
End	Tony Jeter (1963-64-65)
Line	LaVerne Allers (1964-65-66)
Line	Larry Kramer (1962-63-64)
Line	Joe Armstrong (1966-67-68)
Line	Bob Brown (1961-62-63)
Line	Lyle Sittler (1962-63-64)
Back	Dennis Claridge (1961-62-63)
Back	Harry Wilson (1964-65-66)
Back	Bill Thornton (1960-61-62)
Back	Kent McCloughan (1962-63-64)
Kicker	Larry Wachholtz (1964-65-66)

Defense

End	Sherwin Jarmon (1968-69)
End	Langston Coleman (1964-65-66)
Line	Lloyd Voss (1961-62-63)
Line	Wayne Meylan (1965-66-67)
Line	Walt Barnes (1963-64-65)
LB	Ken Geddes (1967-68-69)
LB	Mike Kennedy (1963-64-65)
Back	Larry Wachholtz (1964-65-66)
Back	Dana Stephenson (1967-68-69)
Back	Pat Fischer (1958-59-60)
Back	Ted Vactor (1963-64-65)
Punter	Dana Stephenson (1963-64-65)

Bob Brown (right) was an All-America offensive guard in 1963 and went on to play 10 years in the NFL. He also played linebacker on defense, and Bob Devaney once called him the best two-way player he ever coached. Walt Barnes (below left) was also an outstanding two way player and an All-America tackle in 1965. Freeman White (below right) was an All-America end in 1965 and led the team in receiving, with 28 catches for 458 yards.



Jennings recruited, including several from the same Big Ten area on which Devaney focused. Bob Brown and Bill Thornton were from Ohio. Dennis Claridge, Lloyd Voss and Larry Kramer were from Minnesota.

Devaney called Claridge perhaps the best quarterback he ever coached, and he called Brown, who played linebacker on defense and guard on offense, the best two-way player he ever coached.

Kramer also was an outstanding two-way player at tackle. But he was used only on offense as a senior. "We probably made a mistake when we went offense-defense with him," Devaney wrote in his 1981 autobiography. "He was probably a better defensive player."

Jeter played both offense and

defense as a sophomore and junior. He was exceptional on defense in the Cornhuskers' 13-7 victory against Auburn in the 1964 Orange Bowl game. But he played only offense as a senior in 1965, the first season the rules allowed unlimited substitution.

Although Nebraska didn't throw the ball much during Devaney's early seasons, Jeter and White both earned All-America honors in 1965, forming an outstanding tandem.

Jeter was 6-foot-3, 227 pounds and played tight end.

White was 6-foot-5, 221 pounds and played more of a wide receiver.

"Maybe the two of them would argue who was faster, but I would guess Freeman was," Fred Duda said recently. Duda, a quarterback, was in the same recruiting class, Devaney's

first.

He and White still hold the Cornhusker record for longest pass play. They teamed on a 95-yard scoring pass against Colorado in 1965. White and Jeter "probably wouldn't have been anywhere without me," Duda said jokingly. "Bob Churchich always put the ball where they could catch it."

"They had to dive and jump and leap and all those things when I threw it."

Churchich held most of the school passing records when he finished in 1966.

Jeter and White made significant contributions to those records, as did Dennis Richnafsky (1965-67), a split end from Clairton, Pa., who deserves consideration on the all-decade team.

White led Nebraska in receiving in 1965, with 28 catches for 458 yards and six touchdowns. He also led the team in receiving yards in 1964, with 338, more than one-third of them coming on two plays, a 92-yarder in a 14-7 victory at Kansas and a 56-yarder in a 17-7 loss at Oklahoma.

Jeter led the team in receptions in 1964, with 18 for 219 yards, and he was tied for the team lead in 1963, with nine for 151 yards and one touchdown. That was his only touchdown pass, in fact, until the 39-28 loss against Alabama in the 1966 Orange Bowl game, in which he caught two.

The 1965 team was probably Devaney's best until the national championship teams of 1970 and 1971. It went 10-0 during the regular season and was ranked third in the Associated Press poll when it played the fourth-ranked Crimson Tide of Coach Bear Bryant on New Year's night.

As things played out that day, the Cornhuskers could have been national champions had they defeated Alabama. "I'd like to think we would have fallen into the national title," said Duda.

Ten members of the 1960s all-decade team were on that team: Meylan, Barnes, Coleman, Mike Kennedy and Larry Wachholtz on defense and Jeter, White, Allers and Wilson on offense.

Coach Frank Solich also was on that team, as was Wisconsin coach Barry Alvarez.

Solich was from Cleveland, Ohio, and Alvarez was from Burgettstown, Pa.

Devaney didn't hesitate to leave the state to recruit players.

And some, such as Jeter, he got for a song, you might say. ■

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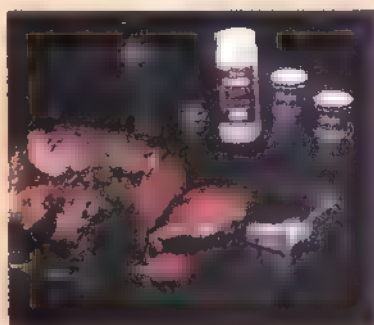
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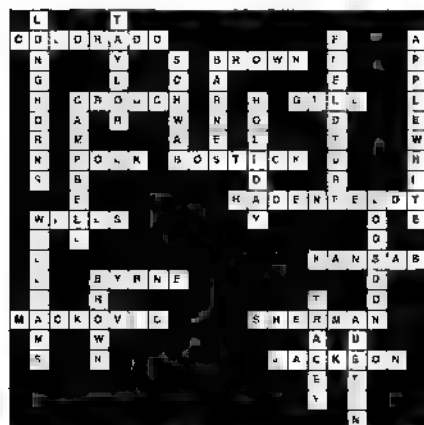


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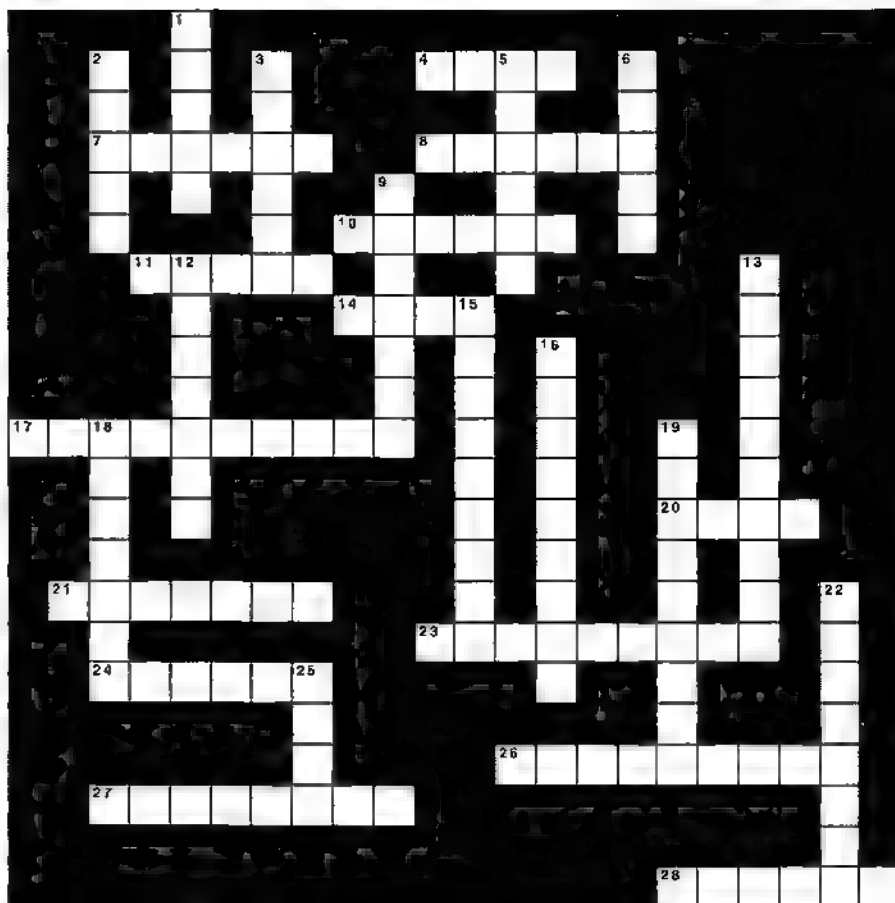
ACROSS

- 4 NU linebacker coach
 7 NU's No. 1
 8 Nebraska's oldest rival
 10 NU's No. 25
 11 Adam Julch's hometown
 14 Michael Booker's younger brother
 17 NU secondary coach
 20 NU's leading tackler
 21 1994 Outland Trophy winner
 23 Former NU quarterback from Kansas
 24 Had 99-yard run vs. NU in 1963
 26 NU assistant formerly at Kansas
 27 Kansas nickname
 28 1972 Lombardi Award winner

DOWN

- 1 NU athletic director
 2 Kansas coach
 3 NU's leading scorer
 5 KU's all-time leading rusher
 6 Former Kansas coach
 9 Leading receiver vs. Kansas in 1998
 12 NU defensive line coach

CROSSWORD



- 13 Leading rusher vs. Kansas in 1998
 15 NU's first road opponent in 2000
 16 Early NU nickname
 18 KU back who starred with Redskins

- 19 NU's No. 82
 22 University of Kansas site
 25 NU's No. 46
 Answers in Nov. 6 issue

This Week in Husker History

October 24

1981 — Fullback Phil Bates scores on a 3-yard run with 23 seconds remaining to give Nebraska a hard-fought 6-0 victory against Missouri at Faurot Field. The touchdown caps a 10-play, 64-yard drive directed by sophomore quarterback Turner Gill, who has been under the pressure of a blitzing defense throughout the afternoon. Split end Todd Brown has two key pass receptions on the drive.

October 11

1997 — Nothing, not even two banks of lights going out during the second quarter at Memorial Stadium in Lawrence, Kan., can stop Nebraska from defeating Kansas 35-0. The Jayhawks never cross midfield against the Cornhusker Blackshirts, who post their second consecutive shutout. I-back Ahman Green and quarterback Scott Frost combine to rush for 244 yards and three touchdowns.

October 26

1991 — Quarterback Keithen McCant rushes for 124 yards and one touchdown and completes 9-of-13 passes for 144 yards

and three touchdowns before leaving the game with a shoulder bruise less than five minutes into the third quarter of Nebraska's 63-6 victory against Missouri. The Huskers top the 60-point mark against MU for the second straight year. NU finished with 681 yards. "The option was pretty much there whenever we wanted it," says McCant.

October 27

1928 — Coach Ernie Bearg's final Nebraska team celebrates Homecoming by defeating archrival Missouri 24-0 at Memorial Stadium. The victory is the fourth in what becomes a six-game winning streak that contributes to speculation the Cornhuskers might be invited to the Rose Bowl. The speculation ends with a scoreless tie against old nemesis Pittsburgh and a 13-3 loss at Army.

October 28

1967 — After back-to-back losses to Kansas and Colorado, the Cornhuskers post the first of three consecutive shutouts, defeating Texas Christian 29-0 at Fort Worth, Texas. The Horned Frogs can manage only 115 yards and four first downs

against a defense led by linebacker Ken Geddes, who intercepts two passes to set up one touchdown and score another on a 39-yard return.

October 29

1994 — With Tommie Frazier sidelined by a blood-clot problem, Brook Berringer directs a 24-7 victory against Colorado at Memorial Stadium. The teams are ranked second and third in the nation. Berringer completes 12-of-17 passes for 142 yards and one touchdown as the Cornhuskers take charge early. Nine of Berringer's passes are to tight ends Mark Gilman and Eric Alford.

October 30

1971 — Quarterback Jerry Tagge completes 10-of-17 passes for 144 yards and one touchdown and I-back Jeff Kinney rushes for 81 yards and two touchdowns as Nebraska passes what is considered its first big test in a second consecutive national championship season, defeating Colorado 31-7 at Memorial Stadium. Colorado, ranked No. 9 at the time, finishes third in the Associated Press poll. ■

Impressed from the Start

NU's athletic program made a big impression on a talented pitcher from Canada

To understand why Lori Sippel came to Nebraska to play softball is to understand her background, growing up on a farm near Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

During her recruitment, "the schools I was most comfortable with were in the Midwest," she said. "This was the closest to the environment I came from, farming communities."

That's why the talented pitcher narrowed her choices to Creighton and Kansas as well as Nebraska, eliminating the other schools she visited, South Carolina and Arizona State.

She also visited Northwestern and Texas A&M following her 12th year of high school. The Canadian school system offers an optional 13th year, however, so she continued.

Her recruitment "was a two-year process," she said.

The Huskers "pulled out all the stops," Sippel said of her campus visit. They did everything they could to convince her she would be comfortable. And, of course, they emphasized that Jay Davis, the women's athletic director at the time, also was Canadian.

Sippel appreciated the efforts on her behalf. But "I didn't need the show," she said. "I just needed to



Lori Sippel is in her 11th year as a Husker assistant.

know I was going to have an opportunity to get better." And Nebraska offered that.

Sippel saw it when she watched Coach Wayne Daigle's team play. And she sensed it when she talked to Daigle and his players. "You could feel the tradition, the work that had been put into the program," she said. "Like old 'Rocky' movies, it kind of pumped me up."

"I knew exactly what was going to be expected of me here."

She also knew that she would have to work hard in order to be successful, that being comfortable with her surroundings didn't mean she also would be comfortable as a pitcher.

"I was really at the point where accolades didn't do it for me anymore," she said. "When I was younger, they did. But at that point, I wanted to go to a program that created a little self-doubt. That's why it was (NCAA) Division I or nothing. I was looking for that challenge."

"I wanted to prove everybody right for recruiting me."

Sippel certainly accomplished that during her four seasons as a Husker. Current coach Rhonda Revelle has said of her assistant: "She put this program on the map as a player."

Sippel holds nearly every school pitching record, including career victories (73), career earned-run average (0.54), strikeouts (838), shutouts (39), no-hitters (10) and complete games (80).

25 YEARS

of Women's Athletics

In celebration of 25 years of women's athletics at Nebraska, Huskers Illustrated is featuring stories with Husker women student-athletes from the late 1970s and 1980s, remembering the way things were and discussing how things have changed.

She was a two-time, second-team All-American and a two-time Academic All-American. And she pitched the only perfect game in Husker history, defeating Drake 2-0 on April 9, 1986.

Nebraska advanced to the College World Series in three her four seasons, finishing second in 1985 and tied for third in 1987. Her record that season was 20-3, with a 0.38 ERA.

Her No. 16 jersey was retired on April 30, 1995.

Sippel, who is in her 11th year as a Husker assistant, has seen significant changes in women's intercollegiate athletics. But she was impressed from the beginning.

"You have to understand, I was coming from a have-not situation," she said. "When the coaches here paid for my first meal on the road, I was like: 'Wow, thanks. You're going to pay for that?'"

Her reaction was the same "when they handed me my first pair of spikes."

There were no interscholastic softball programs in Canadian high schools, and the only prominent intercollegiate program was at Simon Fraser University, an NAIA school.

As a result, Sippel learned the game on club teams, competing against older players, and by pitching against the cement on the side of a barn. "You had to go and play," she said.

After a while, the balls would lose their shape from the impact against the cement.

But "oblong or square, it didn't matter," said Sippel. "You just make do."

Occasionally the balls would hit a board along the cement and sail over Sippel's head and into a nearby creek. "My first lesson was: Oblong and dry is better than oblong and wet," she said. ■



Lori Sippel holds nearly every Nebraska career pitching record, including strikeouts (838) and wins (73).

Growing Up

*Sophomore Kropp,
young teammates
play key roles
for Huskers*

By Todd Henrichs

Jenny Kropp is only a sophomore, but Nebraska Coach Terry Pettit believes she has the ability to play like a veteran for the Huskers this season.

With three freshmen playing key roles for NU, many believe Kropp must continue to mature quickly if Nebraska has any hope of retaining its Big 12 Conference title and advancing deep into the NCAA Tournament.

After a road win at Baylor, the 12-ranked Huskers stood 14-4 overall and 6-2 in conference play with key road games at Texas and Kansas State just ahead.

"We're getting better," Pettit said.

Jenny Kropp had a career-high 15 kills in a loss at Texas A&M.



"We've got a lot of young players on the court, and I think we can compete with anybody."

"But I think more than any year that I've been in college volleyball, you can go into any match and the other team is beatable."

There may be no dominant teams in the sport this season, but Pettit believes Kropp could someday be one of its dominant players. The 6-foot-2 middle attacker from Grand Island Central Catholic saw significant action a year ago, hitting .345 while collecting 39 blocks in 36 games.

This season, she's averaging 1.93 kills and 1.23 blocks per game. Her hitting percentage has steadily risen to .256.

"The biggest change I've seen in Jenny is her consistency," Pettit said. "Even if she's not dominant early in the match, if she just stays with it, sooner or later she has an impact. That's just maturity."

Kropp says she grew up in Nebraska's early season win at No. 8-ranked Florida. The Huskers trailed 6-0 in the first game before rallying to win. Kropp was key in the comeback, serving an ace and coming up with a dig in a rare trip through the back row.

Unless NU has used all its substitutions, Kropp normally is replaced once she rotates from the net. Her time on the sideline is spent gathering input from teammates and coaches as to what she can do better.

"It helps a lot because sometimes you're out there and you really don't know what's going on," Kropp said. "People on the sideline can see what happened a lot better."

Pettit expects to see continued steady improvement from Kropp, who had a career-high 15 kills in the loss at Texas A&M. Her recent play isn't a surprise to coaches throughout the Big 12, who voted Kropp as the preseason newcomer of the year before she ever played her first match at Nebraska last season.

"I don't think there's any question she can be a dominant player, and at times she is for us," Pettit said. "She's playing with passion, and she understands that when she does that, she can be a great player."

Beginning with the Texas A&M match, Kropp went on a tear, where the sophomore averaged 2.4 kills per game and hit a team-best .431.

Kropp believes her surging numbers were a direct result of stability in the team's lineup. Since NU coaches settled on a rotation at midseason, she is connecting better with freshman



Last year as a freshman, Jenny Kropp was named the preseason newcomer of the year.

setter Lindsay Wischmeier, who also saw her spot in the lineup solidified over the last month.

"I think that's helped a lot of the

players," Kropp said, referring to the decision to settle on a lineup. "It's not a guessing game of who's going to play with who anymore."

"Just being more comfortable with Lindsay and Lindsay being more comfortable with me I think has a major impact on my hitting."

Kropp had to battle for her starting spot in the spring and again this fall. In the offseason, she concentrated on getting stronger in the weight room and gaining more experience on the court.

Since winning the job permanently, Nebraska has put together several of its best hitting performances of the season. The Huskers have hit .300 or better in four of the last six matches after hitting under .200 in the three matches ending with the loss at Texas A&M.

Kropp says the team is coming together in time to make a big run down the stretch this season.

"Now that we know each other more and each other's personalities and we have confidence that the other person is going to make the play, things are starting to click more," she said. "We're at the point now where we're all comfortable playing more with each other, where maybe at the beginning of the year, we weren't." ■

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Finding Linemen Difficult

*Defensive tackles,
ends need to have
the total package*

By James Hale

Every college football coach in the country will tell you that finding quality defensive linemen is his toughest assignment of each recruiting season. Finding defensive tackles with the size and speed that is desired is almost an

impossibility, while finding defensive ends who can run well enough to rush the quarterback and contain on the outside isn't any easier.

Finding defensive tackles that are big enough with enough speed and agility is rare. Finding defensive ends in the 250-pound range, with enough

strength to battle offensive tackles, yet nifty enough to elude those tackles and chase down quarterbacks may be even tougher. You can find a number of players who have part of the equation at both positions, and many programs have to settle for that kind of player.

However, over the years, the

Nebraska Commitments for 2000

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Jake Andersen	Denver (Mullen)	6-2	305	OL
Thunder Collins	Los Angeles (East L.A. College)	6-2	210	LB
Ira Cooper	Omaha (Westside), Neb.	6-1 1/2	220	LB
Sandro DeAngelis	Buffalo, N.Y. (St. Joseph Coll.)	5-9	195	FB/K
Mike Erickson	Papillion (Papillion-LaVista), Neb.	6-4	260	OL
Martin Flaum	Denver (Northglenn), Colo.	6-5	280	OL
Steve Kriewald	North Loup-Scotia	5-11	250	FB
DeWayne Long Jr.	West Des Moines (Dowling) Iowa	6-1	205	RB
Lornell McPherson	Omaha (Central), Neb.	5-11	175	DB/WB
Ross Pilkington	Loveland, Colo.	6-1	175	WR
Josh Plisch	Rothschild, Wis.	6-4	290	OL
Nick Povendo	Keller, Texas	6-5	275	OG
Jason Richenberger	Liberty, Mo.	6-3	210	LB
Chris Septak	Millard (West), Neb.	6-4	235	TE

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Cornhuskers have done as good a job as any team in the country finding that prototypical player that they are looking for. We touched on several players in our last issue that could find a spot in the Husker defensive line. Also, remember many times Nebraska will sign a big linebacker, with the intentions of playing him at defensive end.

Nebraska is in the race for two of the top four defensive tackle prospects in Texas Eddie Brown (6-foot-3, 290 pounds with 4.9 speed in the 40-yard dash) of Aldine (Eisenhower), Texas, is one of those rare players with excellent size, but with excellent quickness and speed. Brown knows that his athleticism is what sets him apart.

"My size sets me apart from most players I play against at this level," Brown said. "However, I think my speed and quickness will give me a chance to be successful at the next level. You have to have all the tools to be good in college, and I at least have the athletic ability that can be improved to be a good player."

Brown a year ago made 62 tackles with eight sacks and two fumble recoveries. Through five games this season, Brown has 21 solo tackles, eight assists, two sacks and two fumble recoveries.

Already, Brown has a visit set with Michigan and is working on visits with Texas, Texas A&M, Nebraska and Miami. Brown admits he is leaning toward staying in-state, with the Longhorns or the Aggies but said Nebraska could change his mind.

"I love the Nebraska defense and how aggressive they play," Brown said. "Nebraska is a great school, and they push their athletes to graduate early and to start work on their masters' degree. Nebraska's academic department impresses me."

"I would love to go to school at Nebraska and look forward to it if the opportunity presents itself."

Brandon Johnson (6-3, 285, 4.9) of Carrollton (Smith), Texas is another Texas top-100 talent who has his eye on Nebraska. Johnson moved from Dallas (Bishop Lynch) to the public Smith this season, after starring for two seasons on the private sector. Thus far, through six games, Johnson has been just as dominant against tougher competition, with 35 solo stops, three sacks, one interception and one blocked field goal to his credit.

Johnson has set visits with Miami and Michigan, and both have offered early. He is looking to fill his remaining three visits with either TCU, Baylor, Rice, Missouri, Nebraska, Indiana, Notre Dame, Oklahoma State

With 26 Commitments, Penn State Almost Done With 2000 Recruiting

Every year, Nebraska is one of the most aggressive recruiting schools in the country. It's no secret that Nebraska wants most of its scholarships pledged for by the Christmas break. Nebraska's 14 commitments early puts it in the top ten of college football, however that mark pails compared to what Penn State is doing.

While Nebraska is usually in the top five as far as early commitments go, it's usually the Nittany Lions who lead the way. Penn State always has its entire recruiting class in the bag by Christmas, and usually it's a class that is ranked in the top ten in the country.

This year however, Joe Paterno's boys have picked up the pace even more. Already, Penn State has 26 commitments to its credit and has basically shut down its recruiting hunt.

Apparently, Paterno decided to step up his recruiting efforts after Chris Simms spurned him a year ago, leading the Nittany Lions to believe that Simms was going to sign with them late in the recruiting year. Penn State passed on several other quarterbacks, thinking they were going to sign the top quarterback in the country late.

Of course, Simms never actually committed to Penn State, instead committing to Tennessee before eventually signing with Texas.

However, Paterno said that Simms gave him his word that he was coming to Happy Valley, and when he didn't, that put the veteran coach in a sour mood. So, this season, Penn State offered three quarterbacks in the summer and told them that the first two that accepted the offer would get scholarships, with the third left out of the equation.

Zac Wasserman of Westlake Village, Calif., and Zack Mills of Urbana, Md., jumped on the offers back in the summer. Jeff Smoker of Manheim (Central), Pa., is the top quarterback prospect in-state and thought that Penn State would offer him a scholarship no matter when he decided to take it. When Wasserman and Mills accepted the Penn State offer, Paterno informed Smoker that a scholarship was no longer available for him. Smoker has since committed to Michigan State, but Penn State fans are wondering if Paterno made the right move.

Most agree that Smoker is a better prospect than Mills, and the fact he is the top quarterback in state should give him the edge. However, Paterno wasn't going to get burned again, and once he laid down the ground rules, he was going to follow them.

Penn State's awesome numbers at their summer camps allows it to get a head start on most colleges in recruiting. Nebraska is one program that comes close to matching Penn State when it comes to prospects at summer camps. Penn State is very aggressive at offering prospects off of evaluation at summer camps, and they get a number of prospects to commit early.

The recruiting experts do not always rank those prospects as the top player at their position across the country, but Penn State, like Nebraska, doesn't recruit off a list. They recruit off their own evaluations.

Still, getting 26 oral commitments at this point is amazing and somewhat of a risk. There are a number of top-100 national prospects still on the board that indicate they have an interest in Penn State. However, if Paterno sticks to his word, he won't have a scholarship for them, while the likes of Nebraska and other top-notch programs will.

Nebraska is always aggressive in their recruiting, but it always seems to have a scholarship or two left in the end for that super prospects who just couldn't make up their mind. In the long run, it will be interesting to see which strategy works out best ■

or Memphis.

"Nebraska is a very good football program, one that I think any high school athlete would consider," Johnson said. "Right now they are not in my top two, but certainly in my top five, and I would love to give them a look."

Jason Peters (6-5, 270, 4.9) of Queen City, Texas, has played his way into the minds of a number of college football recruiters across the country. Peters is going both ways as a tight end and defensive end. Through six games, he had caught 13 passes for 195 yards, while making 50 tackles, five sacks and six hurries on defense.

Peters says he is open in his recruiting and is still considering Arkansas, LSU, Florida State, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas State, Tennessee, Texas A&M and Texas.

Linnis Smith (6-5, 255, 5.2) of Tyler (John Tyler), Texas, had 34 tackles with three sacks in a rotating defensive line system a year ago. This year, in a starting role, Smith is really starting to have an impact, as he had 24 solo stops, two quarterback sacks, two quarterback hurries and two fumble recoveries through six games. He said

he is considering Tulane, Texas Tech, Texas A&M, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Colorado, Florida State and Oklahoma State.

Greg Pauly (6-6, 250, 4.65) of Waukesha (South), Wis., is regarded by many as the top defensive end prospect in the country. He has the frame to put on another 30 pounds or so, and he doesn't think he will lose any speed. Pauly can bench 390 and has been a varsity two-way performer since his freshman year.

Pauly appears to be leaning toward Notre Dame but says he is also considering Michigan, Iowa, Nebraska and Wisconsin.

"I am very fortunate to have some outstanding colleges recruiting me at this time," Pauly said. "Nebraska is certainly one of my favorite schools that I hope to visit in December. They have a great defense and their style of defense really fits my style of play."

The Cornhuskers are in California recruiting some of the top defensive line talent. We have an update since our last issue on Calvin Barrett (6-2, 305, 5.3) of Spring Valley (Monte Vista). Barrett is going both ways at offensive and defensive tackle and

played a key role in Monte Vista's 5-0 start.

Barrett has set visits with Arizona and Ohio State and is looking to set visits with Nebraska, Colorado, Wisconsin, Arizona State, Washington or Washington State.

"I really like the Nebraska football program, their coaches and how they approach their business," Barrett said. "Nebraska is certainly a program where I can see myself playing there for the next four years."

Bookend defensive ends Nate Goodson (6-5, 258, 4.7) and Ben Kirish (6-7, 235, 4.7) of Temescal Canyon, Calif., are being recruited coast-to-coast.

"Both have excellent size, athletic ability and can really run. Both play a key role in Canyon being ranked as one of the top teams in California."

"Nate has legitimate 4.7 speed as does Ben, and that is fantastic for players their size," said Canyon Head Coach Bob Burt. "Nate is very physical and can clean 215 pounds. In one game this season, Nate had seven sacks."

"Ben transferred to us from Indiana where he was an all-stater as a junior. He goes both ways for us and does a great job at tight end, despite the fact he has never played the position before. Ben is averaging about three catches per game, and he ran an 11.7 100 meters in track early this year. Both are averaging about two to three sacks per game."

"Teams really throw the ball a lot in our league, so the opportunity is there for a lot of sacks, and they get them."

Goodson is looking at USC, Arizona, California, Texas A&M, Washington and Nebraska. Kirish likes Oregon, Northwestern, Texas A&M, Wisconsin and Nebraska.

Kevin Rooney (6-4, 250, 4.78) of Stockton (St. Mary), Calif., is having a great season in 1999. Rooney has 17 solo stops to his credit, 30 assisted, two sacks, four passes broken up, one caused fumble and one fumble recovery.

Rooney said he is still considering California, Ivy League Schools, Nebraska, Washington, Washington State and Fresno State.

Finally, we have an update on defensive lineman Albert Means (6-6, 305, 5.0) of Memphis (Trezevant), Tenn.

Means has narrowed his list down to five, with Kentucky, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama and Texas making the cut. Means is generally regarded as the top defensive tackle prospect in the South. ■

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**HANA
TIME**

Texas Jinx? Solich Says No

*Focus changes from national championship
to Big 12 title*



**Mike
BABCOCK**

FOR TOM OSBORNE, the nemesis was Oklahoma.

He didn't coach a victory against the Sooners until his sixth try in 1978, and he didn't enjoy consistent success against them until the 1990s, finally balancing his record against them at 13-13.

For Frank Solich, the nemesis could be Texas.

But it isn't right now, according to Solich, even though the Longhorns are 2-0 against

him and have won three in a row from Nebraska beginning with the 1996 Big 12 championship game.

"You never think you could lose to Texas three times in a row," sophomore quarterback Eric Crouch said after the most recent of the three, a 24-20 loss at Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium.

Crouch also played in last season's 20-16 loss at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln.

There was an edge to Solich's voice as he told reporters in a jammed interview room that this loss to the Longhorns would be set aside, just as the one last season was set aside.

There is no time to reflect on losses, or on victories. Good teams move on.

And his is a "very good team," he said.

Whether or not the record reflects that at season's end, however, depends on what happens next. His players "can regroup and move forward or they can slide back," said Solich.

"We will not let them slide back. And they will not let themselves slide back."

Nebraska's resiliency certainly will be tested as it prepares for Kansas, which shocked archrival Missouri 21-0 in Lawrence, Kan., to create a curious situation: a Nebraska-Kansas game in which the Cornhuskers are coming off a loss and the Jayhawks are coming off a victory.

Nebraska won't be looking ahead to Texas A&M, that's for sure.

The Cornhuskers can no longer consider themselves invincible, if they ever did. Now, instead of focusing on the national championship, they must focus on the Big 12 championship.

And that could mean a rematch with Texas in San Antonio on Dec. 4.

"We might see these people again," Cornhusker defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said. "We're not out of this thing yet. We'll come back. We'll look down the road a little bit."

That was a theme in Nebraska's post-game interviews.

"You never know. Maybe we'll get another shot at them

in the (Big 12) championship game," said free safety Clint Finley, one of five Texans on the Cornhuskers' travel roster.

"You never know what will happen."

Defensive tackle Steve Warren echoed Finley.

"Hopefully, we'll see them again," he said.

But, he added, he isn't pulling for the Longhorns to win the south division. "I'm not pulling for anybody," he said. "I'm (just) pulling for our team. If they make it, they make it."

Despite the loss, the Cornhuskers apparently haven't lost confidence in themselves.

"We go into every game with a lot of confidence," wing-back Bobby Newcombe said. "We came out today thinking we were the better team. I still think we are. We just didn't get it done today."

"I thought we were the better team on the field," I-back Dan Alexander said.

Several teams would have to lose now in order for Nebraska to get back into national title contention, not just those that are undefeated, including Florida State, Penn State, Virginia Tech and Kansas State, all of which were in the Associated Press Top 10 going into the weekend.

Mississippi State and Marshall also remained undefeated, and Tennessee, Florida and Georgia Tech (with one loss each) likely will be among those that move ahead of Nebraska in the rankings.

"Right now, the national championship looks out of reach, but you never know. We're just going to go out there (to practice) next week and try twice as hard," said Alexander.

"These things are going to pass. We've got to push on."

This is precisely the kind of predicament in which Nebraska regularly found itself after playing Oklahoma. The biggest

difference was, the Cornhuskers always played Oklahoma late in the season, usually in the final game. As a result, they had no time to regroup.

At least they have an opportunity, however remote it might seem.

The Oklahoma comparison works only because of the immediacy of the loss to Texas, and the fact that the last two games against the Longhorns also have been losses.

But three games hardly constitute a trend, even though the last time Nebraska lost three or more consecutive games against a conference opponent the opponent was Oklahoma (1984-87).

"You could say we're jinxed," Alexander said.

But he wouldn't, "not really," he said.

And neither would Solich. ■



**Coach Frank Solich says his players
"can regroup and move forward or
they can slide back."**

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